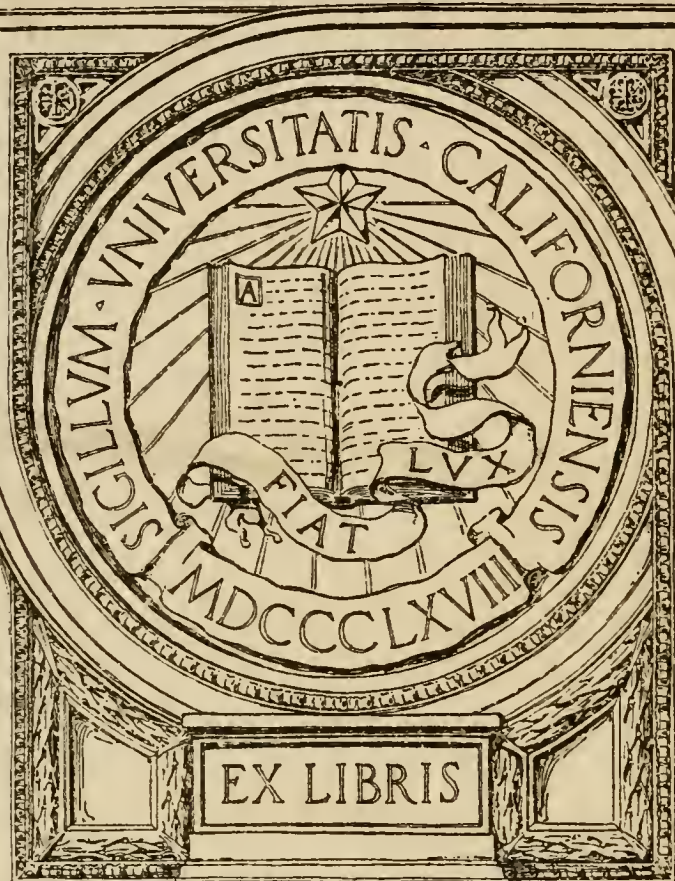


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Bundell. from A. de I.
A 1824

STATEMENT.

OF SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL EVENTS IN THE
PUBLIC LIFE OF

AGUSTIN DE ITURBIDE,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

WITH

A PREFACE BY THE TRANSLATOR, AND AN
APPENDIX OF DOCUMENTS.

LONDON:

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THE
END OF THE
WORLD

P R E F A C E.

THE work of which the following "Statement" is a translation, was written by General de Iturbide while he was in Italy, and was framed as a manifesto addressed to the Mexicans. His chief object was to explain the motives by which his career was guided, from the hour when he proclaimed the independence of his country, until he resigned the throne to which the spontaneous voice of that country had raised him. Speaking to Mexicans he did not deem it necessary to his purpose to go into any minute detail of facts with which they were acquainted, or to comment upon the conduct of all the individuals who took a share in the revolution. He alludes briefly to those events which immediately aided or opposed his own proceedings, touches the leading characteristics of those men who betrayed the confidence which he reposed in them, and justifies, with equal force of argument, his acceptance and his abdication of the Mexican sceptre.

When he wrote this work, he believed that his political career was closed. He had scarcely concluded it, however, when information reached him from various quarters of the distracted state of that country from which he was an exile. By descending from the throne he had left the plan of Mexican independence abruptly unfinished, and in the hands of men who did not understand how to complete it. Seduced by the neighbouring example of the United States, those men supposed, and probably some of them were sincere in their opinions, that a Federal Republic was that form of government which would be most conducive to the union and prosperity of the different provinces of Mexico. But being none of them individuals of much experience in political affairs, or of any considerable acquaintance with the history of foreign countries, they conceived that in order to found a government purely democratical, they had no more to do than to pronounce the word, and decree a constitution. They forgot that the Mexicans had been little removed from the condition of negro slaves from the period of their submission to Spain, until the year 1820, and that neither history or tradition disclosed to them a period when they had been governed only by law. All their habits and associations were connected with servitude on one side, and tyranny on the other. They knew no medium, nor variation, except that in those par-

tial explosions which took place within the last fifteen years, the slave sometimes became a tyrant, and the tyrant a slave. To superficial statesmen it seemed enough to alter the political idiom of the country, whereas it was previously indispensable to change the sentiments, to root out the prejudices and the ignorance of centuries. It is easy to speak of reforms, and to enact them in the legislature, but it is a very different thing to shape them to the aptitudes of the community for which they are intended.

A republican form of government constitutes every individual under it a public functionary; and unless it be intended to deceive the people, and to throw the actual management of the state into the hands of a few demagogues, every individual who has a political duty to discharge, such for instance as that of contributing to the election of a representative, or the imposition of a tax, ought to be acquainted with his own attributes and the relation which they bear to the general system. Under the federal republic the elections would be frequent, and it would require a large body of well-informed men, in order to keep up a succession of effective representatives. But where can be found in Mexico electors, or candidates, of this description? Education has been so limited in that country, that few are to be met with, except the clergy, who can either read or write. As to politics and legislation, the study of them was not only useless, but

dangerous, to a Mexican under the Spanish rule. Now and then, indeed, a few men of enlightened minds emerged from the forests and recesses of the mountains, where obscurity and solitude protected their studies. But what are these in a republic of seven millions of people ?

“ After education,” says an able Peruvian writer *, “ nothing determines so much as wealth the kind of government which is fit for a community. When the greater number of the inhabitants of a country can live independently upon the produce of their capital, their estates, or their industry, each individual possesses more freedom of action, and is in less danger of renouncing his rights through fear, or corruption. It is true, indeed, that those who live in abundance may sometimes be as liable to be corrupted as those who pine in misery ; but it is not probable that all those who have a secure subsistence would sell their votes in the assemblies of the people ; would prostitute their characters in the bosom of the national congress ; would basely seek for public employments only to abuse them, or endeavour to excite the people to insubordination. He who possesses a capital, of whatever sort it be, with which he can satisfy his wants, is anxious only for the preservation of order,

* M. Monteagudo, who was lately minister for foreign affairs in Peru. The above passage is quoted from his “ Memoria sobre los principios politicos que segui en la administracion del Peru,” a little pamphlet full of sound political and practical wisdom.

which is the principal agent of production ; the habit of thinking upon what injures, or promotes, his interests, suggests to him exact notions of the rights of property, and though he be ignorant of the theory of all other rights, he soon becomes practically acquainted with them from reflection. Where such elements exist, it would not be difficult to form a democracy."

It is scarcely necessary to observe that, though Mexico is naturally the richest country perhaps in the world, yet its circulating wealth is very limited, and even that does not belong to the people. They possess as yet neither individual independence, education, or political spirit, and a scheme of government must be wholly unsuited to their genius, which depends upon the free and enlightened exertions of the community, and in every department of it stands in need of the powerful control of public opinion.

What M. Monteagudo further observes of Peru is equally applicable to Mexico. " The diversity of conditions, and the multitude of castes, the strong aversion which they entertain towards each other, the diametrical opposition of their character, the difference between them in their ideas, their usages, their customs, and their wants, and as to the means of satisfying them, present a mass of antipathies and of hostile interests, which threaten the subversion of all social order, unless a wise and

vigorous government restrain them by its influence. This danger is now the more to be apprehended, since those considerations and habits have been relaxed, which had hitherto served to curb their mutual animosities: those animosities will become more active and destructive in proportion as democratic notions become more general; and the very persons who are now fomenting such ideas, will perhaps be their first victims.

“ In such a state of things, and without any other criterion than that of which men long accustomed to insult and outrage are susceptible, they naturally believe, on hearing liberty and equality proclaimed, that obedience at once ceases to be a duty; that respect for the magistrates is a favour conferred upon the individuals, and not a homage due to the authority which they exercise; that all conditions are equal, not only before the law, for this is a qualification which they do not comprehend, but also to the most absurd extent to which the term equality can be supposed to apply, and that if those chimerical rights are denied them, the time is arrived when they are at liberty to assert them by the physical strength of those arms which have been so long enured to the fatigues of servitude. The necessary inference is, that the relations which subsist between masters and slaves, between classes which hate each other, and between men who form as many social subdivisions as there

are shades in their colour, are incompatible with the idea of a democracy."

"Those who believe that it is possible to apply to such a country the constitutional reforms of North America, either know not, or forget, the point from which both countries have set out. There is not, nor can there be, any analogy between provinces thinly peopled, very remote from each other, and whose moral and physical resources are of no value unless they are concentrated under a beneficent system, and the United States, which at the time of their emancipation, had already a more dense and a more independent population, which were accustomed to the exercise of legislative (though limited) functions, and possessed a form of government which traced out the ground-work of their present institutions."

The consequences of endeavouring to force upon a people ideas for which they were not prepared, and of calling them to the exercise of duties which they did not comprehend, were anarchy, and the immediate separation of the greater number of those provinces which, under Iturbide, had been united. He was not, however, diverted from his pursuit of retirement by the information which he received in Italy upon that subject, accompanied as it was by the most pressing solicitations for his return to Mexico. He had taken a house for his family in the vicinity of Leghorn, but he was not long there before he had

reason to believe that he became an object of jealousy to the Holy Alliance. As soon as the constitution was overthrown in Spain, the Allies bent their thoughts to South America, and Iturbide received private intimations which informed him that they were anxious to place him in the hands of Ferdinand, either for the purpose of avenging the leading part which he took in achieving the independence of Mexico, or of rendering him an instrument for the restoration of that country to the Spanish yoke*. After visiting Florence, where he had an interview with Lord Burgersh, he resolved to proceed to England, where alone he could expect safety. He left Leghorn on the 20th of November last in an English merchant ship, but after being a few days at sea he was compelled by adverse weather to put back to the same port, and in the beginning of December he set out for England by land. His departure was no sooner known at the Tuscan court, than the French minister sent his secretary after him, in order to procure his detention. Iturbide, however, passed rapidly through

* These intimations have been since fully confirmed by Ferdinand's act of *amnesty*, which, however, would be more properly designated an act of proscription, so numerous are its exceptions. The 13th article expressly excepts from pardon "those European Spaniards who took a direct part, and efficaciously contributed in forming the convention or treaty of Cordova, which Don Juan O'Donoju, of hateful memory, signed with Don Agustin Iturbide, who headed the insurgents in New Spain."

Piedmont, and instead of entering France he turned off to Geneva, and from thence proceeded along the Rhine to Ostend. He there embarked for this country, where he arrived on the 31st of December.

The information, (from whatever quarter it proceeded,) which Iturbide received, was borne out by the fact, that the Tuscan authorities would not permit the work, of which the following "Statement" is a translation, to be printed at Florence. But it was still further strengthened by the conduct of the authorities at Leghorn to Madame de Iturbide, after his departure. It was arranged that she should join her husband in England as soon as possible, but she was not able to effect her object without a great deal of difficulty, though it is due to M. Chateaubriand to say, that when she and her family reached Paris, he personally interested himself in order to facilitate her journey, feeling, perhaps, that it would certainly be inhuman, and might be impolitic, to detain her.

This translation was finished before the end of February, but a question then arose whether it ought to be immediately published. Mexico became every day more and more distracted, and it occurred to the sensitive mind of General de Iturbide, that as this work, if given to the world, would necessarily reach his countrymen, it might operate, or at least seem intended to operate,

as a fresh torch of discord amongst them. Influenced by this and other considerations, he desired the publication to be postponed.

In the mean time, almost every vessel which came to England from Mexico, brought the most earnest entreaties that he would return to that country. The letters stated that the Federal Republic held only a few of the provinces by a fragile bond; that the royalist, or Bourbon party, was exerting every art of intrigue to foment the intestine divisions to which the counter-revolution gave birth; and that amongst the republicans there was not sufficient energy, or talent, to organize a government that could endure, nor sufficient personal influence, even if it could endure, to render it popular. These letters deplored the miseries of a people without confidence in their rulers, the destinies of the nation clouded, the channels of public happiness obstructed, and the empire of religion hastening to dissolution; they called upon Iturbide by the ties of his birth, his friendships, and kindred, by the remembrance of his aged father, who was still in Mexico, and by the more solemn obligations which he contracted towards his country, by giving it the boon of independence, to return to that country, and once more redeem it from destruction.

General de Iturbide had besides peculiar sources of communication, which left no doubt on his mind that Ferdinand

would make another desperate attempt to press back the rejected yoke of Spain upon at least a portion of her former colonies. He had unequivocal reasons for knowing that this attempt would be favoured by every member of the Holy Alliance, and that the refusal of England to discuss the question in a new Congress, was the only obstacle which prevented them from declaring their views, and from acting upon them, in the face of day. He was not ignorant how much might, and would, be done by secret intrigue and dexterous corruption; that though France might not dare to lend her transports and legions to Spain, as she had prematurely promised, yet, that she might have a perfect understanding with the other Continental Powers, for privately supplying Ferdinand with the means to fit out new expeditions, at the same time that the allied agents in the American provinces would carry on the work of discord.

Under these circumstances it was that, towards the beginning of April, Iturbide received at Bath fresh solicitations, more earnest than ever, for his return to Mexico. [He felt that he could no longer refuse these entreaties without sacrificing his duties to his country. Uninfluenced by any views of personal aggrandizement, he looked only to the independence of Mexico, which he had the glory to achieve, and he determined, even if he were to join the ranks as a private soldier, to take a

musket in his hand, and shed the last drop of his blood in battle for that sacred cause.]

He came up to town, consulted with his friends, arranged every thing for his departure, which was favoured by an extraordinary combination of circumstances, and after placing six of his children* at different schools, he sailed with Madame de Iturbide, his two infant children, and a small suite from Cowes on the 11th of May—a day which curiously enough happened to coincide with that on which twelve months before he sailed from Mexico for Italy. Before his departure from town he left the following letter as explanatory of his views.

“ My dear Sir,—It is probable that as soon as my departure is known, different opinions may be expressed, and that some of them may be falsely coloured. I wish, therefore, that you should know the truth in an authentic manner.

“ By a misfortune that is much to be deplored, the principal provinces of Mexico are at this moment disunited: all those of Goatemala, New Galicia, Oajaca, Yacatecas, Queretro, and others, sufficiently attest this fact.

“ Such a state of things exposes the independence of the country

* The eldest son, a fine youth of sixteen, is at Ampleforth College, near York: the second, now about six years old, is at a preparatory school at Hampstead; the two eldest girls, under twelve, are at the Convent of Taunton; and the two youngest at Spetisbury-house, near Blandford, Dorsetshire.

to extreme peril. Should ~~she~~ lose it, she must live for ages to come in frightful slavery.

“ My return has been solicited by different parts of the country, which consider me necessary to the establishment of unanimity there and to the consolidation of the Government. I do not presume to form such an opinion of myself ; but as I am assured that it is in my power to contribute in a great degree to the amalgamation of the separate interests of the provinces, and to tranquillize in part those angry passions which are sure to lead to the most disastrous anarchy, I go with such an object before me, uninfluenced by any other ambition than the glory of effecting the happiness of my countrymen, and of discharging those obligations which I owe to the land of my birth—obligations which have received additional force from the event of her independence. When I abdicated the Crown of Mexico, I did so with pleasure, and my sentiments remain unchanged.

“ If I succeed in realizing my plan to the extent which I desire, Mexico will soon present a government consolidated, and a people acting upon one opinion, and co-operating in the same object. They will all recognise those burdens, which, if the present government continued, would only fall upon a few ; and the mining and commercial transactions of the country will assume an energy and a firmness of which they are now deprived. In anarchy nothing is secure.]

“ I have no doubt that the English nation, which knows how to think, will easily infer from this statement the probable political situation of Mexico.

“ I conclude with again recommending to your attentions my children, in my separation from whom will be seen an additional proof of the real sentiments which animate the heart of your very sincere friend,

“ AGUSTIN DE YTURBIDE.

“ MICHAEL JOSEPH QUIN, Esq., *Gray's Inn.*”

A duplicate of this letter was placed by General de Iturbide in the hands of his commercial agent, Mr. MATTHEW FLETCHER, a merchant in the city.

This letter is a clear indication of Iturbide's intention not to interfere with any existing engagements, which have been formed by the Republican government with this country. Should his plan succeed, as he states above, "*all* the provinces will recognise those burdens, which if the present government continued, would fall only upon a *few*." When in this country, he witnessed, and frequently expressed approbation of the conduct of Mr. Hurtado, with regard to the admission of the Columbian loan: he avowed the injustice, and strongly condemned the refusal of Ferdinand to acknowledge the engagements of the Spanish Cortes. Principle is with Iturbide an adequate motive, but interest must likewise oblige him to allow the existing loan of Mexico, for he foresaw, and even somewhat prepared for, the necessity which the Mexican state might have of a further loan, so soon as the conditions of the one already negotiated would admit.

General de Iturbide, on his departure, confided it to the discretion of his friends to publish the following "statement," and as the reasons which induced him originally to suspend the publication, have been in a great measure removed by the circumstance of his departure

for Mexico, those friends conceive that they ought no longer to detain from the Public a work, which, though limited in its extent, sheds light upon an interesting epoch of South American history.

In order to render some parts of it intelligible to the English reader, it may be useful to recapitulate some of the leading events of the Mexican Revolution, which preceded Iturbide's appearance on the scene. Ever since the conquest of Mexico by the Spaniards, the memory of their cruelties had remained deeply engraven on the hearts of the natives, and nothing but the sword kept them in subordination. At the period of that conquest the natives were, and still remain, composed of different castes, who, whatever may be their mutual antipathies, always concentrated them against the European Spaniards. The separation of the North American States from the dominion of England, caused a strong sensation amongst the Creoles of Mexico, as well as of other parts of South America; they were the classes next in society to the Spaniards, and, therefore, bore a more intense animosity against them. The Creoles saw the Spaniards raised to every office of trust and emolument in the country, while they, the natives of the soil, were the victims of every sort of injustice and oppression. Yet, as soon as they heard that the Junta of Seville, in 1808, proclaimed war against France, they forgot their

wrongs, they firmly refused to transfer their allegiance to Joseph Buonaparte, and resolved to hold their country for Ferdinand. The viceroy at that period was Iturrigary; he was popular amongst the Americans, on account of his conciliatory conduct towards them, and for the same reason he was hated by the Spaniards, who were from interest mostly in favour of the new King Joseph. The Europeans, aided by French intrigue, deposed Iturrigary, and he was succeeded by Venegas, whose administration rendered him peculiarly odious amongst the Americans. The latter had already felt their strength in the community of their feelings towards Ferdinand, their resistance against the acknowledgment of Joseph, and the influence which they possessed with Iturrigary. His deposition and the conduct of Venegas, operated powerfully on their minds, and conspiracies were formed for the purpose of exterminating the Spaniards. A simultaneous insurrection was concerted to take place throughout the kingdom, but it was frustrated by accident. A curate of Dolores, of the name of Hidalgo, was the head of the conspiracy in Guanaxuato, one of the richest and most beautiful provinces of Mexico. He opened his plans to Iturbide, who was then a young man, but they appeared to him to offer little chance of success, and he refused to aid them. Hidalgo and his undisciplined followers traversed different provinces, and every where marked their course by

plunder and blood. He was at length destroyed ; but his exertions had excited many imitators, and for nine or ten years the provinces were harassed, and industry interrupted, by a succession of ignorant adventurers, whose only object was to acquire wealth by robbery, and a barbarous preeminence by unrelenting massacre. One of the most distinguished leaders of those banditti, after Hidalgo, was another priest of the name of Torres. In Mr. Robinson's *Memoirs of the American Revolution*, there is a portrait of this chieftain, drawn with great power, and it seems to be a correct specimen of the insurgent leaders of that period.

“Torres had under his command an immense extent of country, which had been parcelled out, like the feudal system of old, into districts or *comandancias*. It was a prominent feature of his policy, to select for the government of these districts, men whose gross ignorance, he conceived, would render them subservient to his will, and proper subjects to promote his views of sole dominion. Many of these commandants followed the example set them by Torres, directing their principal attention to personal enjoyments. Without a government capable of enforcing obedience, they were uncontrolled in their proceedings, and acted according to their own pleasure in their respective *comandancias*. The revenues of the state they looked upon, not as belonging to the public, but as their individual property, and consi-

dered they were conferring an obligation on the republic, when any of its resources were devoted to its service. The forces raised were only such as they thought proper, and were taught to look upon their commandants as masters, whose mandate *alone* they ought to obey. The peasantry were regarded as vassals devoid of every privilege, upon whom they had a right to heap injuries, and the soldiery to prey with impunity. Each commandant became a petty tyrant in his district ; the interests of the country were no longer viewed as primary objects, but were supplanted by a devotion to self-gratification ; while the chief aim and end of exertion, was to preserve the goodwill of the *Sultan* Torres. On his part, he was a proficient in the arts necessary to ingratiate himself into the good opinion of these men. He would gamble and drink with them ; would run races, and fight game cocks, in which science Torres was extremely dexterous, till they were stript of their money. In short, as long as the commandants conformed to his instructions, he neither investigated nor cared what was their conduct. It was therefore by no means extraordinary, that Torres, after being appointed commander-in-chief, maintained an absolute power ; that his orders were implicitly and promptly obeyed. Had they emanated from a man celebrated for correct and upright conduct, more awe and reverence could not have been attached to them. His head-quarters were fixed on the top of the mountain of

Los Remedios, which he fortified, at the cost, and to the ruin of many families round its base. There, surrounded by women and all the luxuries the country afforded, he became indolent and capricious, issuing the most arbitrary decrees, and like a demi-god, from his lofty seat, smiled at the effects of his imperious mandates upon the faithful Americans by whom he was upheld. When in the zenith of his glory, he was to be seen surrounded by sycophants and women, singing the most fulsome songs in his praise, while, extended on a couch, and fanned by one of his females, he would listen with rapture to the grossest adulation, and indulge in loud bursts of laughter, arising from his heart-felt satisfaction: swelling and exulting with vain glory, he would often exclaim, “*Yo soy xefe de todo el mundo,*” (*I command the world*). Such was the character of the leader of the revolutionists in the western provinces.”

During the interval between 1810 and 1816, Iturbide held a high command under the viceroys, and made several successful expeditions against the insurgents, who were little more than roving banditti, and who became the terror of the country. They were at length dispersed in a great measure about the close of 1819; and in 1820, soon after the proclamation of the Constitution in Spain, a fresh ferment commenced. This is depicted in the following pages.

The writer of those pages, General de Iturbide, is now

about forty years of age; his frame is of the middle size, well proportioned, and, from his military experience, capable of enduring hardship and privation. His countenance possesses benignant expression, and his manners are simple and frank. It is impossible to know him without feeling attachment for him. By a good fortune, which is not common in South America, his education was attended to early in life. He is versed in classic literature, and his ordinary conversation is marked by a peculiar conciseness and strength of expression. When engaged on any subject of importance, his language rises into a natural eloquence, and becomes flowing, graceful, and impressive. His mind is of a profound and noble order, and from the foresight, comprehensiveness, and happy truth of his views, admirably adapted for the organization of an infant country. His talents as a soldier, and his uniform success in the field, have caused him to be idolized by the army. His heart was softened in early life by an affection for the lady who became his wife, while both were still young, and who is now the mother of a numerous family. It is in the circle of that family, while his children are around him, that Iturbide is seen most delighted; it is from that circle that his public virtues have derived their finest impulse, and in which they meet their best reward. With respect to his power of conciliating the opinions of those who differ from him, a gentleman who has recently come from South Ame-

rica, and whose testimony is beyond all suspicion, says that, “ Such was Iturbide’s address, that in every case of conquest, he converted into active friends all those who had been indifferent before, and seldom failed to gain over to his cause, the most powerful of his enemies ; while, at the same time, he won the confidence and esteem of every one, by his invariable moderation, humanity, and justice*.”

General Iturbide has declared, that if he obtain any influence upon his return to Mexico, he will use it in introducing, as far as the genius of that country will permit, the political institutions of England. While he was here he made himself acquainted with those institutions, and felt for them the greatest admiration. He has declared also his earnest desire to cultivate the closest political and commercial relations with our Government, and there can be little doubt that the restoration of his influence would be attended with peculiar advantages, not only to the Mexican but to the British people.

THE TRANSLATOR.

London, 3d June, 1824.

* See extracts from a journal written on the coasts of Chili, Peru, and Mexico, by Captain Basil Hall.



STATEMENT.



STATEMENT,

&c.

THE epoch in which I have lived has been a critical one ; equally critical is the moment at which I am about to submit to the world a sketch of my political career. The public are not uninformed of my name, or of my actions ; but they have known both through a medium greatly discoloured by the interests of those persons who have transmitted them to distant countries. There is one great nation* particularly, in which several individuals have disapproved of my conduct, and

* Although the Spanish nation, when it declared for the Constitution, gave an example of the high value which a people ought to set upon their liberties, yet at the same moment it condemned in the Mexicans that freedom of sentiment, which at home it considered as an invaluable blessing. Such is the effect of human passions ! We know what is for our good, we wish to possess it, and we are displeased that others should seek it when their desire is incompatible with our own real or apparent interests !

have misrepresented my character. It becomes my duty, therefore, to relate my own history. I shall tell with the frankness of a soldier, both what I have been, and what I am. My actions and their motives may thus be fairly judged by every impartial person of the present age, still more by posterity. I know no other passion or interest save that of transmitting to my children a name which they need not be ashamed to bear.

It would be an idle waste of time to set about refuting the various attacks which have been circulated against me; they are framed in terms calculated only to reflect dishonour upon their authors.

< It was my good fortune to break the chains which enthralled my country: I proclaimed her independence: I yielded to the voice of a grateful and a generous people, and allowed myself to be seated on a throne which I had created, and had destined for others; I repressed the spirit of intrigue and disorder. These are my crimes; notwithstanding which I now appear and shall continue

to appear, with as serene a countenance before the Spaniards and their King, as I have worn before the Mexicans and their new rulers. To both countries I have rendered important services, though neither knew how to profit of the advantages which I acquired for them.]

In the year 1810, I was simply a subaltern officer; a lieutenant in the provincial regiment of Valladolid*, my native city. It is well known, that the individuals who serve in those troops receive no pay. The military profession was not the principal object of my pursuit. I possessed an independence, and attended to the improvement of my property, without disturbing my mind with the desire of obtaining public employments. I did not stand in need of them, either for the purpose of affording me a subsistence, or of adding distinction to my name, as it pleased Providence to give me an honourable origin, which my forefathers have never stained, and which down to my time all my kinsmen have supported by their conduct.

* About sixty leagues from Mexico.

When the revolution, set on foot by Don Miguel Hidalgo, curate of Dolores, broke out, he offered me the rank of lieutenant-general *. The offer was one that might have tempted any young man without experience, and at an age when his ambition might be excited. I declined it, however, because I was satisfied that the plans of the curate were ill contrived, and that they would produce only disorder, massacre, and devastation, without accomplishing the object which he had in view. The result demonstrated the truth of my predictions. Hidalgo and those who followed his example, desolated the country, destroyed private property, deepened the hatred between the Americans and Europeans, sacrificed thousands of victims, obstructed the fountains of public wealth, disorganized the army, annihilated industry, rendered the condition of the Americans worse than it was before, by exciting the Spaniards to a sense of the dangers which threatened them ; they, moreover, corrupted the manners

* Don Antonio Lavarrietta, in a report which he sent to the Viceroy against me, admits that I might have held one of the principal ranks in that revolution, if I wished to participate in it. Lavarrietta was well acquainted with the propositions which were made to me.

of the people, and far from obtaining independence, increased the obstacles which were opposed to it

If, therefore, I took up arms at that epoch, it was not to make war against the Americans, but against a lawless band who harrassed the country. The Mexican Congress, at a later period, proposed that statues should be erected to the leaders of that insurrection, and that funeral honours should be paid to the ashes of those who perished in it. I have warred with those chiefs, and I should war with them again under similar circumstances. The word insurrection in that instance did not mean independence and equal liberty;—its object was, not to reclaim the rights of the nation, but to exterminate all the Europeans, to destroy their possessions, and to trample on the laws of war, humanity and religion. The belligerent parties gave no quarter: disorder presided over the operations on both sides, though it must be acknowledged, that one party are censurable, not only for the evils which they caused, but also for having provoked the other party to retaliate the atrocities which were perpetrated by their enemies.

About the month of October in the year 1810, I was offered a safe conduct for my father and family, together with assurances that his property and mine should be exempted from conflagration and plunder, and that the people attached to them should not be subject to assassination (which was at that time a matter of ordinary occurrence), on the sole condition that I should quit the standard of the king and remain neutral. These propositions were made to me by the leaders of that disastrous insurrection, and are well known to the Mexicans. I was then at San Felipe del Obraje, commanding a small detachment of infantry, and at a distance of four leagues from me was Hidalgo with a considerable force. I gave the same answer to these overtures as to the propositions already mentioned. I always looked upon that man as criminal, who in a season of political convulsions, sheltering himself in cowardly indolence, remained a cold spectator of the evils which oppressed his country, and made no effort to mitigate, at least, if he could not remove, the sufferings of his fellow citizens. I therefore kept the field, with a view equally to serve the king, the Spaniards, and the Mexicans.

I was in consequence engaged in several expeditions, and had the good fortune to see victory never desert the troops under my command, except on one inconsiderable occasion (in 1815), when I made an attack on Coporo, a military point, which was well fortified, and inaccessible, from the nature of the ground. I then served under the orders of Llanos, a Spanish general. He commanded me to attack the place; delicacy forbade me to offer any opposition to his mandate, though I was fully convinced that the result could not be favourable. As soon as I was on the march, I communicated my opinion to the general by despatch: I retreated as I had foreseen I should do, but I had the good fortune to preserve four-fifths of my force, in an action in which I apprehended that I should have lost the whole.

I engaged with the enemy as often as he offered battle, or as I came near him, frequently with inferior numbers on my part. I led the sieges of several fortified places, from which I dislodged the enemy, and I rendered them incapable of serving afterwards as asylums for the discontented. I had no other opponents than those of the cause which I

defended, nor any other rivals than those who were envious of my success.

In 1816 the provinces of Guanajuato and Valladolid, and the army of the north were under my command; but I resigned my office through a sense of delicacy, and retired to pursue my natural disposition, in the cultivation of my estates. The reason of my resignation was this: two inhabitants of Queretaro, who were subsequently assisted by four or five families in Guanajuato, three of which consisted of the families of three brothers, and ought therefore to be considered as one, sent a memorial against me to the viceroy. Many were the crimes of which they accused me; they could not, however, find one witness to support their charges, though I had resigned for the purpose of removing every obstacle to their coming forward, by taking away the motives of hope on the one side, or of fear on the other. The families of the Countess Dowager of Rul, and of Alaman, gave proof, by abandoning the accusation, that they had been taken by surprise, and that they had been deceived. The Viceroys, Calleja and Apodaca took cognizance of the matter,

and after hearing the reports of the Ayuntamientos, the curates, the political chiefs, the commandants and military chiefs, and of all the most respectable persons in the two provinces, and the army (who not only made my cause their own, but gave me tokens of their unqualified approbation), they affirmed the dictamen of their auditor, and of the two civil ministers, declaring that the accusation was false and calumnious in all its parts, that I had permission to institute an action of damages against the slanderers, and that I might return to discharge the functions of the office which I had resigned. I did not choose to resume the command, nor to exercise my right of action, and I gave up the pay which I enjoyed.

The ingratitude which I experienced from men had wounded my feelings deeply ; their insincerity, to call it by no severer name, made me shun every opportunity of again becoming the object of their attacks. Besides, the anger of the contending parties having expended itself, and the country having returned to a state of comparative tranquillity, I was relieved from that sense of obligation which six years before had compelled me to

have recourse to arms. My country no longer stood in need of my services, and without betraying my duty, I thought that I might now rest from the toils of the camp.

In 1820 the constitution was re-established in Spain. The new order of things, the ferment in which the Peninsula was placed, the machinations of the discontented, the want of moderation amongst the supporters of the new system, the vacillation of the authorities, and the conduct of the government and Cortes at Madrid, (who, from the decrees which they issued, and the speeches which some of the deputies pronounced, appeared to have determined on alienating the colonies,) filled the heart of every good patriot with the desire of independence, and excited amongst the Spaniards established in the country, the apprehension that all the horrors of the former insurrection were about to be repeated. Those who exercised the chief authority, and had the forces at their command, took such precautions as fear naturally dictated; and those persons who at the former epoch had lived by disorder, made preparations for again turning it to

advantage. In such a state of things the richest and most beautiful part of America was about to become again the prey of contending factions. In every quarter clandestine meetings took place, for the purpose of discussing the form of government which ought to be adopted. Among the Europeans, and their adherents, some wished for the establishment of the Spanish constitution. They succeeded in realizing their views to a certain extent, but the system was badly understood, and the loose manner in which it was obeyed, indicated the shortness of its duration. There were some who conceived that it ought to undergo modifications, inasmuch as the constitution framed by the Cortes at Cadiz was inapplicable to "New Spain." Others there were who sighed after the old absolute government, as the best support of their lucrative employments, which they exercised in a despotic manner, and by which they had gained a monopoly. The privileged and powerful classes fomented these different parties, attaching themselves to the one or the other, according to the extent of their political information, or the projects of aggrandizement which their imaginations presented. The Americans wished for

independence, but they were not agreed as to the mode of effecting it, still less as to the form of government which they should prefer. With respect to the former object, many were of opinion that in the first place, all the Europeans should be exterminated, and their property given up to confiscation. The less sanguinary would have been contented with banishing them from the country, thus reducing thousands of families to a state of orphanage. The moderate party suggested only that they should be excluded from all public offices, and degraded to the condition in which they had kept the natives of the country for three centuries. As to the form of government, one party proposed a monarchy, tempered by the Spanish, or some other constitution; a second party wished for a federative republic; a third for a central republic; and the partisans of each system, full of enthusiasm, were impatient for the accomplishment of their different objects.

I had friends in the principal towns, many of whom had been long connected with my family; others I had known in my expeditions, and during the period when I held my command. The army, I

had reason to believe, was strongly attached to me. All those who knew me did their utmost to supply me with information. I had visited the best provinces, obtained accurate information as to the nature of the country and the character of the inhabitants, the points capable of being fortified, and the resources upon which dependence might be placed. I saw new revolutions on the eve of breaking out ; my country was about to be drenched in blood ; I was led to believe that I had the power to save her, and I did not hesitate to undertake so sacred a duty.

I formed my plan*, known under the title of “ the Plan of Iguala.” A pamphlet, which I have seen, has asserted that that project was the work of a club of serviles, who held their meeting at the *Profesa*, a building belonging to the congregation of St. Philip, in Mexico. Any person who reads the document must be convinced, from its contents alone, that it could not have been dictated by servilism ; I put out of the question the opinions of those persons to whom it is attributed, and shall only say that they are matters upon which the mul-

* See the Appendix of Documents, No. 1.

itude is very commonly mistaken. For me, I look upon those persons as men eminently respectable for their virtues and their knowledge. After the plan had been drawn out, I consulted upon it with distinguished individuals of different parties ; not one of them disapproved of it ; it was not modified in any manner ; nothing was added or erased.

In tracing out this project, my aim was to give independence to my country, because such was the general desire of the Americans ; a desire founded on natural feelings, and on principles of justice. It was, besides, the only means by which the interests of the two nations could be secured. The Spaniards would not allow themselves to be convinced that their decline began with their acquisition of the colonies, while the colonists were fully persuaded that the time of their emancipation had arrived.

The plan of Iguala guaranteed the religion which we inherited from our ancestors. To the reigning family of Spain, it held out the only prospect which survived for preserving those ex-

tensive and fertile provinces. To the Mexicans, it granted the right of enacting their own laws, and of having their government established within their own territory. To the Spaniards, it offered an asylum, which, if they had possessed any foresight, they would not have despised. It secured the rights of equality, of property, and of liberty, the knowledge of which is within the reach of every one, and the possession of which, when once acquired, every man would exert all his power to preserve. The plan of Iguala extinguished the odious distinction of castes, offered to every stranger safety, convenience, and hospitality; it left the road to advancement open to merit; conciliated the good opinion of every reasonable man; and opposed an impenetrable barrier to the machinations of the discontented.

The operation of putting the plan into execution was crowned with the happy result which I had anticipated. Six months were sufficient to untwist the entangled knot which had bound the two worlds. Without bloodshed, without fire, robbery, devastation, without a tear, my country was free, and trans-

formed from a Colony into an Empire *. In order to render the work conformable to received customs,

* All the Europeans who were willing to follow the fate of the country, preserved the offices which they had obtained, and were promoted successively to those to which they had a right by their services and merits. Subsequently they were called to take upon them the higher offices, and to discharge the most important commissions. In the Congress, in the Council of State, in the departments of the ministry, in the army, in the commands of the provinces, there were Spaniards in no little number. Those who did not choose to be citizens of Mexico, had full liberty to remove themselves, together with their families and effects, to such places as they deemed most convenient. Pecuniary assistance for their journey was given to such of the public functionaries as asked for it, to the extent of the fourth part of the stipends which they had enjoyed. To the military men, the expenses of their voyage to Havannah was advanced; and this kindness was shewn even to those persons who, after the government was established, and after they had given their parole not to oppose it, attempted, with arms in their hands, to overthrow it, and were defeated and disarmed. At such a crisis, this conduct on my part gave rise to an opinion, that I was secretly in concert with the expeditionary troops (of Spain); but if such had been the fact, they doubtless would have declared it, if for no other purpose than that of shifting upon me the blame of an attempt, which dishonoured themselves and their officers; which personally disgraced them and reduced them to the degradation of being defeated, disarmed, taken prisoners, and prosecuted. The result of these proceedings would necessarily have been fatal to them; but here also they met with indulgence, and were pardoned. Not one Spaniard was harshly treated, during the war for independence which I directed.

only one additional circumstance was required—a treaty, which the diplomatists would add to the long catalogue of those which they already possess, and which commonly turn out to be only so many proofs of the bad faith of men, as they are not seldom violated when it is the interest of one of the parties, and he happens to be the strongest. Nevertheless, it is right to follow the laws of custom. On the 24th of August*, I had an interview with that most worthy Spanish General, Don Juan de O Donoju ; and on the same day was concluded between us a treaty, which bears the name of the place where it was signed †, and was sent off to His Majesty, Ferdinand VII., by an officer of O Donoju's suite.

The treaty of Cordova opened to me the gates of the capital, which otherwise I could have forced. But it is always delightful to me to be spared the necessity of exposing my men, and of shedding the blood of those who had been my companions in arms.

There were persons who raised questions on the

* 1821. † See the Appendix of Documents, No. II.

treaty of Cordova, by doubting my authority, as well as that of O Donoju, to enter into a compact upon a matter of so much delicacy. It would be easy to answer them, by saying that in me was deposited the will of the Mexican people at that period ; in the first place, because that which I signed in their name was conformable to what they must have desired ; and secondly, because they had already given proofs of their sentiments ; such as were able to bear arms, by joining me, and others by assisting me in every way which lay in their power. In every place through which I passed, I was received in the most enthusiastic manner. Seeing that no one was forced to exhibit these demonstrations, it is to be inferred that they approved of my intentions, and that their ideas accorded with mine. With respect to General O Donoju, he was the principal authority furnished with credentials from his government, and even though he might not have received specific instructions for that particular case, the circumstances authorized him to do the best he could for his country.

Had this general commanded an army superior to mine, and possessed resources sufficient to enable

him to carry on war against me, he might have properly refused to sign the treaty of Cordova, without first communicating with his government, and receiving its answer. But attended as he was with scarcely a dozen officers, the whole country being in my power, his mission being adverse to the sentiments of the people, unable to procure intelligence of the state of things, without any knowledge of the localities, shut up in a weak fortress, which was exposed to our fire, with an army in front of him, and the few troops of the king who had remained in Mexico, commanded by an intrusive chief* ; under such circumstances, let those persons who disapprove of the conduct of O Donoju say what they would have done if they had been in his place, or what they imagine he ought to have done? He must have signed the treaty of Cordova, or have become my prisoner, or have returned to Spain! he had no other alternative. If he had chosen either of the latter, all his countrymen would have been compromised, and the government of

* Don Francisco de Novella, Field Marshal and Inspector of Artillery in Mexico, who by means of a military commotion, possessed himself of the supreme authority after deposing the Viceroy Apodaca.

Spain would have lost every hope of those advantages which it then obtained ; advantages which it never would have acquired, if I had not been in the command, and if O Donoju had not been an able politician as well as a faithful Spaniard.

I entered Mexico on the 27th September, 1821 ; on the same day was installed the Junta of government which is spoken of in the plan of Iguala, and the treaty of Cordova. It was nominated by me, but not according to my arbitrary choice, for I wished to assemble together such men of every party, as enjoyed the highest reputation amongst their friends. This was the only means which could be resorted to in such extraordinary circumstances for consulting the public opinion.

Up to this point my measures gained general approbation, and in no instance were my hopes deceived. But as soon as the Junta began to exercise its functions, it perverted the powers which had been granted to it ; and within a few days after its installation, I saw what was likely to be the issue. From that moment I shuddered for the fate that

awaited my fellow citizens. It was in my power to resume the whole authority, and I asked myself, ought I not to resume it, if such a step be essential to the safety of my country? I considered, however, that it would have been rash of me to resolve on undertaking such an enterprise, relying solely on my own judgment. If I were to consult with others, my design might transpire, and intentions, which had sprung solely from my love for my country, and from a desire to promote its happiness, might be attributed to ambitious views, and construed into a violation of my promise. Besides, even if I were to accomplish every thing which I proposed, I could not have done it without infringing on the plan of Iguala, which it was my great object to maintain, because I looked upon it as the ægis of the public welfare. These were the true reasons which, together with others of less importance, restrained me from taking any decisive measures. They would have brought me into collision with the favourite feelings of the cultivated nations of the world, and have rendered me, for some time, an object of hatred to a set of men, who were infatuated by chimerical ideas, and who had never learned, or had soon forgotten, that the republic

which was most jealous of its liberty, possessed also its dictators. I may add, that I have always endeavoured to be consistent in my principles; and as I had proposed to form a Junta, I fulfilled my promise, and was reluctant to undo the work of my own hands.

There were at this time some deputies in Mexico who set little value on the public happiness, when it is opposed to their private interest, and who had acquired reputation by some actions that appeared generous to those who were benefited by them without knowing the secret views by which they had been prompted. They were well acquainted with the mysteries of intrigue, ever ready to stoop to servility when they found it expedient, and to assume insolence when their star was in the ascendant. These men disliked me because I had hitherto been successful in my career, and they began to foment those parties which were afterwards known under the titles of Republicans and Bourbonists, and which, however they differed on other points, were united in their opposition to me.

The Republicans were hostile to me, because

they well knew that they could never bring me to contribute to the establishment of a government, which, whatever might be its attractions, did not suit the Mexicans. Nature produces nothing by sudden leaps; she operates by intermediate degrees. The moral world follows the laws of the physical. To think that we could emerge all at once from a state of debasement, such as that of slavery, and from a state of ignorance, such as had been inflicted upon us for three hundred years, during which we had neither books nor instructors, and the possession of knowledge had been thought a sufficient cause for persecution; to think that we could gain information and refinement in a moment, as if by enchantment; that we could acquire every virtue, forget prejudices, and give up false pretensions, was a vain expectation, and could only have entered into the visions of an enthusiast*.

The Bourbonists, on the other hand, wished for

* Many are the reasons which might be alleged against the boasted republic of the Mexicans. Those persons add little to the arguments in its favour, who compare New Spain, as it was called, with the United States of America. Misfortune and time only, I fear, can impart to my countrymen every thing which they want. Would that I may be mistaken!

my fall, because as soon as the decision of the government of Madrid was made known, through its decree of the 13th of February*, which was subsequently transmitted by the minister for the colonies, and in which the conduct of O Donoju was formally disapproved, the treaty of Cordova became null and void, as to that part of it which invited the Bourbons to the crown of Mexico, and effective with respect to the nation's entering into the full enjoyment of its right to elect as sovereign the individual whom it would deem most worthy of that high office. The Bourbonists, therefore, no longer expecting that a Bourbon would reign in Mexico, thought only of our returning to our former state of dependence; a retrogression which was impossible, considering the impotence of the Spaniards, and the determination of the Americans.

Hence I became the object of attack to both these parties, because as I had the public force at my command, and was the centre of general opinion, it was necessary to the preponderance of either party that I should cease to exist.

* See Appendix, No. III.

The leaders of the factious spared no pains to gain proselytes; and certainly they found many to adhere to them. Some who were the least experienced, suffered themselves to be easily led away; because they saw nothing more in the projects on foot than what was represented to them, and there is no design of which different views may not be given; some hoped that by the subversion of the government, they might advance their own fortunes; and others, the natural enemies of established order, in whatever system it prevails, were anxious only for a change. Among the latter, one might be named who values himself on his literary accomplishments, and has made himself conspicuous in the revolution.

The first duty of the Junta after its installation, was to frame the Convocatoria, or proclamation for the assemblage of a Congress*, which was to give a constitution to the Monarchy. The Junta took

* This Convocatoria contained instructions prescribing the mode of election, and apportioning the number of deputies to be returned by each district. It was addressed in the first instance to the provincial deputations, and they distributed it through their jurisdictions.

more time to perform this duty than the urgency of the case permitted, and committed several errors in framing the Convocatoria. It was extremely defective, but with all its imperfections it was accepted; I could do no more than perceive the evil, and lament it. The census of the provinces was not consulted; hence, for instance, one deputy was appointed for a province containing a hundred thousand inhabitants, and four for a province scarcely peopled by half that number. Nor did it at all enter into the calculations of the Junta, that the representatives ought to be in proportion to the civilization of the represented. Three or four individuals might be easily selected from among an hundred well-educated citizens, who might possess the qualifications necessary to constitute good deputies; whilst among a thousand, who are without education, and are ignorant of the first rudiments, scarcely one man can be met with of sufficient ability to know what is conducive to the public welfare—whose mind is sufficiently enlarged to take accurate views of public affairs, or at least to save him from extravagant errors respecting them; who has sufficient firmness of character to vote according to what he thinks

best, and not to deviate from his opinion when once convinced of its truth ; and whose experience enables him to perceive the grievances which afflict his province, as well as the remedy which they require. For, although that remedy might not always be within his reach, such experience would enable him, on hearing others proposed, to form a sound judgment upon them.

These defects were quite sufficient to extinguish every hope, that any benefits would be derived from the Convocatoria of the Junta. It had many other faults which I have not mentioned, as I do not mean to comment upon them. But there is one which I cannot pass over in silence, that of having the deputies nominated at the will, not of a district (Partido), for that would be of a majority of the citizens, but of the Ayuntamientos of the principal towns. See the injury thus done to the country people at large ! In the elections, a vote was given by the Junta, to the electors chosen by the country people ; and a voice was also given to the individuals who composed the Ayuntamiento of the principal town of each department. But in electing

the Ayuntamientos, it was possible to get into them by a little management, as was in fact frequently done ; because the wish of aspiring to the functions of these bodies, was not so general as the ambition of obtaining a seat in Congress. The Ayuntamientos were, therefore, filled up at their own pleasure, and were consequently vitiated ; and as all the members possessed a vote in the elections for deputies, the Ayuntamientos became almost the only electors. This is evident to any one who knows how thinly the population is distributed over that country, and how great a disproportion exists between the number of inhabitants in a town, and in its dependencies.

To render this clearer, let it be supposed that a principal town of a province contains four, eight, or ten thousand inhabitants, leaving out of the question the city of Mexico, the population of which exceeds one hundred and seventy thousand souls, and other cities densely inhabited. The Ayuntamiento of such a town consists, perhaps, of fifty or sixty members ; the departments which have to send electors to the principal town, name no more

than eight or ten. This small number, therefore, acting in conjunction with all the members of the Ayuntamiento, is reduced to a cipher, and the election terminates according to the pleasure of that body. Thus the people were deceived by being told, that in *them* resided the sovereignty, which they were to delegate to the deputies whom they were about to name ; when in fact there was no such nomination, except on the part of the Ayuntamiento, or rather, indeed, of the directors of the Junta, who, after the dissolution of that body, passed into the Congress, in order to continue their manœuvres.

To this system, so framed, was added intrigue in the elections ; the most worthy men were not sought for, nor even those who were decided for any particular party. It was quite sufficient if the candidate were my enemy, or so ignorant* that

* In order to give some idea of the political information of some of the deputies, it is sufficient to adduce the example of one of those who were concerned in the accusation for a conspiracy, which shall be mentioned in a subsequent page. He claimed inviolability, as the diplomatic agent of what he called the Republic of St. Salvador ; which was nothing more than a part of a

he might easily be persuaded to become so. If he possessed either of these requisites, he was deemed competent to discharge the sacred functions which were to be entrusted to him.

If the archives of State have not been spoliated, remonstrances may be found amongst them from almost all the provinces, pointing out the nullity of the powers conferred on the deputies. Several individuals were elected who had been accused of conduct notoriously scandalous; some had been prosecuted as criminals: others were men of broken fortunes, tumultuous demagogues, officers who had capitulated, and who, violating the laws of war and their paroles, had again taken up arms against the cause of liberty, and after suffering defeat had surrendered a second time. Some of the new deputies were obstinate anti-independents, and one was an

province in the kingdom of Goatemala, then in insurrection, but soon after tranquillized. He was persuaded, that there was nothing incompatible in his being a deputy of Congress, and at the same time the diplomatic agent of a foreign power to the nation of which he was a legislative representative! This is a fact, which appears from the proceedings that were instituted in the office of the first ministry of state.

apostate monk *, although by law no member of the religious orders could have a seat in congress. The authors of the remonstrances offered also to prove, that the rules for the conduct of the elections, as they were laid down in the Convocatoria, had been infringed; and that the persons returned were not those whom the majority approved, but those who were the most skilful in intrigue. These documents were all sent to my department, when I was Generalissimo and Admiral-in-Chief; when I became Emperor, I directed them to be transmitted to the department of the Interior, for the purpose of being deposited in the archives. I did not wish to lay them before the Congress, because even if justice were done, which could hardly be expected, I saw that they would be productive only of odium, and of legal prosecutions. I considered that time would be lost in new elections, as it would be necessary to have the most of them renewed, and I felt that our most important care was first to organize the government. Besides, I thought that the errors into which this Congress might fall, might be corrected by that which should succeed it. This

* Such he was generally believed to be.

mode of reasoning, which would have been questionable perhaps under any other circumstances, was suitable to those which then existed, because the object was to avoid greater evils.

The result of the elections, therefore, was the formation of a congress, perfectly conformable to the wishes of the party who influenced its nomination. A few men of undoubted virtue and wisdom, and of the purest patriotism, whose fair reputation was so widely extended that no machinations could prevent them from having a majority of suffrages, found themselves confounded with a multitude of intriguers, of assuming manners, and sinister intentions. I do not desire to be credited on my mere assertions; examine the acts of the congress during the eight months that elapsed from its installation until its suspension. The principal object of its assembling was to draw up a constitution for the empire: not a single line of it was written. In a country, naturally the richest in the world, the treasury was exhausted; there were no funds to pay the army or the public functionaries; there was no revenue, nor even a system of finance

established, as that which had existed in the time of the Spanish rule, had been abolished, without any other system having been substituted for it. The congress would not occupy itself in matters of such essential importance, notwithstanding the repeated and urgent solicitations which I made to it in person, and through the secretaries of state. The administration of justice was wholly neglected; in the changes which had taken place some of the officers had left the empire, some died, others had embraced new avocations, and the offices and tribunals were nearly deserted. Upon this subject also the congress declined to take any steps: in short, although the empire was in the weakness of infancy, and wanted their assistance at every point, they did nothing. The speeches which were pronounced, turned on matters of the most trifling description, and if any of them happened to touch on topics deserving of consideration, they were, to say the least of them, foreign to the exigencies of the moment. What honours should be paid to the chiefs of the insurrection, who had fallen? What should be the form for the oath of an archbishop? Who ought to nominate the supreme

tribunal of justice? Such, together with a demand for an apostate friar who was a prisoner in the castle of S. Juan de Ulua, and other similar subjects, formed the grave occupations of a body, so august in its institution! Add to this, that not a single regulation was made for the government of the interior. The result was, that the congress became the opprobrium of the people, and fell into a state of abject contempt. The public prints exposed its defects, and even one of the deputies* stated his opinion that it stood in need of reformation.

It soon became manifest that the object of those who gave all its movements to that machine, was only to gain time, and to deceive each other until they found an opportunity, for the arrival of which they secretly laboured, in order to throw off the mask. Notwithstanding the cunning which they used, and the dissimulation with which they en-

* Don Lorenzo Zabala, deputy for the province of Merida and Yucatan, at that time as well as upon other occasions, publicly expressed himself favourable to a reform of the congress, but after the scene was changed, he was one of those who murmured loudest against the government.

deavoured to carry on their designs, the people and the army saw through their real views.— Neither the army nor the people desired slavery on one hand, or republicanism on the other; nor did they wish to see me deposed, or even in any manner offended, and from these feelings arose that distrust with which the whole nation received all the resolutions that originated in so vitiated a body.

About the month of April, 1822, a state of agitation was observable, which threatened to end in anarchy. A public measure, effected in a scandalous manner, discovered the hypocrisy of its authors. The congress deposed three of the Regents, leaving in office with me only one, who was well known to be my enemy, for the purpose of reducing my vote in the executive to a nullity*. They did not attempt to depose me, from an apprehension that they would be resisted by the army and the people, of my influence with whom they were well aware.

* The Regency consisted of five members—Don Manuel de la Bareena, Don Ysidro Yanez, Don Manuel Velasco de Leon, Don Jose Antonio Perez, and myself as President.

This resolution was passed in the most precipitate and singular manner. The question was proposed, discussed, agreed to, and carried into execution in one sitting, whereas it had been previously settled by decree that every proposition which was submitted to the congress, should be read three times, at three distinct sittings, before it should be discussed. After this step they proposed another; a commission, appointed for that purpose, presented a regulation concerning the regency, in which the command of the army was declared incompatible with the functions of the executive power. They were jealous of my having the soldiery at my disposal: to such men fear was very natural. This regulation, although it did not receive the sanction of the legislature on account of the want of time, left no doubt of the designs which were entertained against me, and was the immediate cause which accelerated the event of the 18th of May. At ten o'clock on that memorable night the people and garrison of Mexico proclaimed me emperor. "Live Agustin the First," was the universal cry! Instantly, as if all were actuated by the same sentiment, that extensive capital was illuminated; the

balconies were decorated, and filled with the most respectable inhabitants, who joyously echoed back the acclamations of the immense crowds of people which thronged all the streets, especially those near the house where I resided. Not one citizen expressed any disapprobation, a decided proof of the weakness of my enemies, and of the universality of the public opinion in my favour. No accident or disorder of any kind occurred. The first impulse of my mind was to go forth and declare my determination not to yield to the wishes of the people. If I restrained myself from appearing before them for that purpose, it was solely in compliance with the counsel of a friend who happened at the moment to be with me. "They will consider it an insult," he had scarcely time to say to me, "and the people know no restraint when they are irritated. You must make this fresh sacrifice to the public good : the country is in danger ; remain a moment longer undecided, and you will hear their acclamations turned into death-shouts." I felt it necessary to resign myself to circumstances ; and I spent the whole of that night in allaying the general enthusiasm, and persuading the people and the troops to

give time for my decision, and in the meanwhile to render obedience to the Congress. I went out repeatedly to harangue them, and wrote a short proclamation, which was circulated the following morning*, and in which I expressed the same sentiments as those I addressed to the people. I convened the Regency, assembled the generals and superior officers, communicated what had occurred by despatch to the President of the Congress, and requested him to summon immediately an extraordinary sitting.—The Regency was of opinion that I ought to yield to public opinion ; the superior officers of the army added that such also was their unanimous opinion, that it was expedient I should do so, and that I was not at liberty to act according to my own desires, as I had dedicated myself entirely to my country ; that their privations and sufferings would be useless if I persisted in my objections ; and that having compromised themselves through me, and having yielded me unqualified obedience, they had a claim to my compliance. They subsequently drew up a memorial which they presented to the Congress, requesting it to take this important matter into their consi-

* See Appendix, No. IV.

deration. This paper was signed also by the individual who subsequently officiated as President of the act of Casa-Mata *, and by one of the present members of the executive body.

The Congress met on the following morning ; the people crowded to the galleries and the entrance to the chamber : their applauses were incessant ; a joyous agitation was observable in every face ; the speeches of the deputies were interrupted by the impatience of the multitude. It is difficult to obtain order in moments like these ; but such an important discussion required it, and in order to attain that object, the Congress required that I should be present at the sitting. A deputation was appointed, who communicated the invitation to me. I declined it, because as they were about to treat of me personally, my presence might be considered as a restraint on the freedom of debate, and an impediment to the clear and frank expression of each individual's opinion. The deputation and several general officers, however, prevailed on me to ac-

* See Appendix, No. XI.

cept the invitation*, and I immediately went out in order to proceed to the place where the Congress was assembled. The streets were scarcely passable, so crowded were they with the inhabitants of the capital; they took the horses from my carriage, and I was drawn by the people, and amidst their enthusiastic acclamations, to the palace of the Congress. On entering the hall where the deputies were assembled, the *vivas!* were still more enthusiastic, and resounded from every quarter.

The question of the nomination was discussed, and there was not a single deputy who opposed my accession to the throne. The only hesitation ex-

* One of those who were the most pressing that I should attend the sitting of that day, was Lieutenant-General Don Pedro Celestino Negrete, now a member of the executive. This General had been previously my friend, appeared so then, and continued to conduct himself as such until the last moment of my abdication, when he rendered it but too apparent that his professions never had been sincere, and that he is one of those men who shape themselves without any difficulty to circumstances. Self-love often makes us believe that we have some good quality, capable of fixing the levity of those who having been false friends to others, still may, we flatter ourselves, be true to us. Negrete had been faithless to General Cruz, to whom he owed his success in his profession, and it was not difficult to foresee that he might act with respect to me, as he had already done towards his benefactor.

pressed by a few, arose from a consideration that their powers were not extensive enough to authorize them to decide on the question. It appeared to them that it would be necessary to notify the subject to the provinces, and to require from them an enlargement of the powers already granted, or new powers specifically applicable to this case alone. I supported* this opinion, as it afforded me an opportunity of finding out some means for evading the acceptance of a situation which I was most anxious to decline. But the majority were of a contrary opinion, and I was elected by seventy-seven voices against fifteen†. These latter did not deny me their suffrages; they confined themselves simply to the expression of their belief, that the provinces ought to be consulted, since they did not think their powers ample enough, but at the

* I addressed the people three times in favour of the arguments urged by the deputies who inclined to this opinion; enforcing as well as I could the principles on which they were founded, and enforcing them with the more warmth, as I was deeply interested that their counsel should be followed.

† There were ninety-four deputies present, two of whom went out without voting, which, however, would not prevent them from being counted; although, without them the requisite number was complete, as will be seen in the sequel.

same time they said that they were persuaded, that their constituents would agree with the majority, and think that what was done was in every respect conducive to the public welfare. Mexico never witnessed a day of more unmixed satisfaction; every order of the inhabitants testified it. I returned home as I had proceeded to the Congress, my carriage drawn by the people, who crowded around to congratulate me, expressing the pleasure which they felt on seeing their wishes fulfilled.

The intelligence of these events was transmitted to the provinces by express, and the answers which successively came from each of them, not only expressed approbation of what had been done, without the dissent of a single town, but added that it was precisely what they desired, and that they would have expressed their wishes long before, if they had not considered themselves precluded from doing so by the plan of Iguala and the treaty of Cordova, to which they had sworn*.

* At the time they felt themselves so bound, they did not know that the treaty of Cordova was rendered null and void as to the invitation given to the Bourbons, by its having been disapproved of at the court of Madrid.

I received also the congratulations of an individual who commanded a regiment, and exercised great influence over a considerable part of the country. He told me that his satisfaction was so much the greater, as he was anxious to avoid making himself remarkable; but, at the same time, that he had made arrangements for proclaiming me, in case it had not been done in Mexico*.

The authors of the libels which have been written against me, have not passed over the occurrences of the 18th and 19th of May, amidst which they represent me as acting the part of an ambitious tyrant, attributing the proceedings which took place, to secret management on my part, and the intrigues of my friends. I feel assured, that they never can prove the truth of these assertions, and that they will receive no credit from those who know, that on my entry into Mexico, on the 27th of September, as well as on my swearing to our

* Brigadier Santana, Colonel of the Infantry Regiment, No. 8, the first who subsequently proclaimed the Republic in the city of Vera Cruz, and one of those who afterwards declaimed the loudest against my elevation to the throne.

Independence, on the 27th of October, it was likewise generally wished that I should be proclaimed Emperor. If I was not so proclaimed at that time, it was because I did not wish it*, and it was with no small difficulty that I prevailed on those who were then raising the shout, to desist from their purpose.

If, as has been imputed to me, I at that time conceived any intention of assuming the crown, I should not have declared the very reverse in the plan of Iguala, adding this difficulty to those with which the enterprise was already attended. Nay, if that plan had been framed for the purpose of deluding the country, as some persons have been pleased to assert, what reason was there for repeating the same clause in the treaty of Cordova, when I was under no necessity of dissembling? If even up to that period I wished for some particular cause to conceal my design, what occasion could I have found more favourable to its accomplishment than the 27th of September and the 27th

* See what the Congress states in its manifesto of the 21st of May, which will be found amongst the Documents, No. V.

of October in that year* ? The whole empire was then actually ruled by my voice ; there were no troops except those which were under my command ; I was Generalissimo of the army ; the soldiers were all attached to me, and the people called me their liberator ; no enemy threatened me on any side, and there were no longer any Spanish troops in the country. The cabinet of Madrid had not an individual throughout all New Spain, to whom it could address its decrees ; the exertions of that court did not alarm me, as I was not ignorant of the extent to which they could reach. If I did not grasp the sceptre at a time when I not only could have been emperor, but had to vanquish a thousand difficulties in order to prevent being so, how can it be said that I obtained it afterwards only by intrigue and cabal ?

It has been asserted also, that there was not sufficient freedom in the congress for my election †,

* 1821.

† If they had not freedom on the 19th of May, 1822, how could they have possessed it on the 2d of April, 1823, when they declared all the acts of my government null and void ? On the 19th of May, 1822, the scrutiny was secret ; on the 2d of April,

inasmuch as I was present while it was carried on. It has been already seen that I attended because the congress itself invited me. That the galleries did not allow the deputies to deliver their sentiments, is untrue; each member, who chose to rise, expressed his opinion without more than some few interruptions, which always happens where matter of such importance is under deliberation, without the decrees so discussed, being therefore considered less binding than those which are passed at a secret sitting. It has been further alleged that some superior officers accompanied me on that occasion. The office which I then held, and the object for which I had been

1823, the scrutiny was carried on in public, in the presence of the chiefs of the revolution, and of many military young men who had already lost all discipline, and all respect for the constituted authorities. On the 19th of May they had my assistance and support; I explained myself to that effect at the sitting I mentioned the same thing in my proclamation of that day, and took every opportunity of repeating it. They had proofs of my adherence to my word. But to whom did they intrust their freedom of deliberation, when they framed the decree of nullification? To an army commanded by men who refused to acknowledge them after their re-installation, and who said that they would submit only to such of their decisions as were adverse to me. This appears from a document drawn up at Puebla, which has appeared in the public journals.

invited to attend, required that I should have around me those to whom I could communicate my orders in case of necessity. However vehemently they may assert that my retinue imposed restraint on the congress, the very persons who state this are convinced that it is not true. Four aides-de-camp and the commanding officer of my escort accompanied my suite ; besides these I saw six or eight captains and subalterns, who were first mingled with the crowd that thronged the entrance of the hall ; these did not go in with me, and were, therefore, no more than so many spectators, wishing to gratify their curiosity ; but neither the latter nor the former, neither the soldiers nor the people, said, or did any thing which could be construed to menace, or in any manner restrain the congress, even if it had been composed of the most timid characters, and had been electing the weakest of mankind. It is equally false that the hall had been filled with the people, and that the deputies were confounded amongst them. Unfortunately this has been affirmed by the congress itself ; thus proving that it was composed of men as changeable as they were weak, who were not ashamed to declare in the face of the world,

that they voted under the influence of fear against their conscientious opinions, on a question of the gravest importance which could be presented for their deliberation. What confidence can the provinces repose in them? What duties can be confided to their care with the hope of an auspicious result? What laws can be dictated by a legislature devoid of probity? And what opinion can be formed of a body which has no firmness, and blushes not to proclaim its servility? I should have considered as a libeller, any man who said that the congress had not acted from its own free will; but as it has itself declared the same thing, and as I am not in a situation to give judgment on the matter, those who have heard both sides will decide according to what appears to them, and posterity, I doubt not, will form an opinion of that assembly little honourable to its reputation.

It has been further alleged that the number of deputies present was not sufficient to give validity to the election. Ninety-four attended, one hundred and sixty-two was the total number for that portion of the empire which was previously called the vice-

royalty of Mexico: from the kingdom of Goatemala which was subsequently added to it, deputies could not be received, because in some of the districts the elections were carried on conformably to the Spanish constitution, and in others according to a particular convocatoria which they framed. An exception must also be made as to the deputies who were to have come for the provinces of San Salvador, who are included in the calculation of my adversaries, but who ought not to be enumerated, because that country had declared a government independent of Mexico. However, taking even the twenty-four deputies for Goatemala into account, the total number would be one hundred and eighty-two, the half of which is ninety-one. The sitting was attended by ninety-four deputies, although only ninety-two voted; whence it follows that allowing all the restrictions which are demanded, there were still the half and one more present, according to the rule of the Spanish constitution, which, it was agreed, should be observed upon this point; although many decrees had the force of law, at the passing of which no more than seventy or eighty deputies had been present. And what will the supporters of the nullification say to

the fact, that on the 22d of June, 1822, without any desire on the part of the Government, without any extraordinary assemblage of the people which might overawe the deputies, without being pressed for time in their deliberations, without my presence serving as an obstacle, without any agitation in the capital, and the whole garrison being in profound tranquillity, the congress of its own accord resolved, with the entire unanimity of one hundred and nine deputies who were present *, that the crown should be hereditary in my family in lineal succession, giving the title of Prince of the Empire to my eldest son, whom they designated as the heir-apparent, of Mexican Princes to the rest of my sons, Prince of the Union to my father, and Princess de Iturbide to my sister? They also prescribed the regulations for my inauguration, and all this they did without its having been preceded, or attended, by any of those causes which compelled them, as they alleged, to

* It was proposed to express in the act that the declaration of the dynasty had been made by acclamation, and the reason that it was not so expressed was, that a deputy observed that the question had been discussed and was now at an end. This circumstance alone prevented it from being said that it had been by acclamation, although there was not one dissenting voice.

join in the first acclamation. I mention this, not for the purpose of establishing rights, which I have renounced with the most perfect good will, but to answer the cavils which have been thrown out against me, and to shew the bad faith with which I have been treated.

In order to avoid murmurs, I did not, after my election, bestow those favours which are usually lavished on such occasions*. It is not true that I distributed money, or that I gave away any appointments, except that of a captain to a serjeant, not for his having contributed to my elevation, but because he bore the best character in his regiment; and I wished to give the soldiers a proof of my attachment for them, by promoting an individual whom they considered worthy of a superior rank †.

* The Brigadier Santana, who had made preparations for proclaiming me without consulting the congress, offered and gave promotions to the officers upon whose co-operation he depended, and I disapproved of them.

† See in the Appendix, No. V. what the congress said to the Mexicans, after having elected me, and compare it with what the same congress stated in its decree and declaration (No. VI. and VII.) of the 8th of April, 1823; such conduct on the part of the Mexican government, as is displayed in those documents, furnishes

I have already frequently said, and I cannot too often repeat it, that I accepted the crown only with the view to serve my country, and to save it from anarchy. I was well persuaded that my personal situation was any thing but improved ; that I should be persecuted by envy ; that the measures which I could not avoid adopting, would dissatisfy many ; that it was impossible to please all ; that I was about to clash with a body which was full of ambition and pride, and which, at the very moment it was declaiming against despotism, laboured to concentrate within its own circle all the power of the State, leaving the monarch reduced to a mere phantom, and assuming to itself not only the enactment, but the administration and execution of the laws ; a tyranny which is always more intolerable when in the hands of a numerous body, than when deposited in those of a single individual. The Mexicans would have been less free than the inhabitants of Algiers, if the Congress had carried all its designs into effect. At one time or other they will be undeceived ; may

sufficient proof that the persons who placed themselves at the head of the republican party, were devoid of the virtues indispensable to that form of government.

it not be so late as that the difficulties which surround them shall be found insuperable ! I was well aware that I was about to become the slave of business ; that the duties which I undertook would not be looked upon with a favourable eye by all parties ; and that by a fate which some would consider fortunate, but which I would have always avoided if it were possible, I was about to abandon every thing which I had inherited and acquired, and with which my children would have been enabled to live independently, wherever they chose.

Upon my accession to the throne, it appeared as if all dissensions had subsided into repose. But the fire, though latent, continued to burn ; the different parties, though they dissembled for a short time, still carried on their machinations ; and the conduct of the Congress became the scandal of the people. I repeatedly received information of clandestine meetings, which were held by several deputies, for the purpose of devising the subversion of the government—a government, be it remembered, that was sworn to by the whole nation, which solemn act was performed in different provinces solely upon

the intelligence being transmitted through private letters, without waiting for official advices. The conspirators were fully aware that they were proceeding in direct contradiction to the general will ; and, in order to have a pretext for their treasons, they found it necessary to propagate a report that I was desirous of becoming an absolute monarch. Not a single reason did they ever allege in proof of such an accusation, Indeed, how could they bring any proof against one who twice refused to accept the crown that was offered him ; who, at a time when he knew no rival in the opinion of the people or army, not only did not seek to preserve the unlimited power which he had obtained, but dismembered and parted with it ? When I entered Mexico, my will was law ; I commanded the public forces ; the tribunals possessed no attributes, save those which emanated from my authority. Could I be more absolute ? And who compelled me to divide my power ? I, and I alone ; because I considered it just. *Then*, at least, I did not wish to be absolute ; could I have desired it afterwards ? How can they reconcile my adoption of such opposite extremes ?

The true cause of the conduct pursued by the Congress is that this machine was set in motion by the impulse received from its directors ; and these persons saw with secret aversion, that I achieved the independence of the country, without the assistance of any one of them ; whereas they desired that every thing should be ascribed to themselves. Although they had not the resolution to act in the season of peril, they sought to render themselves conspicuous by deluding the multitude with school-boy disputations, and by setting themselves up as sages to whom the ignorant were to look up with reverential respect !

In the mean time, so many denunciations, complaints, and remonstrances, reached my hands, that I could not avoid attending to them, both because the public tranquillity and safety were exposed to danger, and because documents of the same description were sent to me by the different departments of government ; and if any misfortune occurred, (and misfortunes of the most formidable kind were on the eve of happening,) I should have been responsible to the nation and the world.

I resolved, therefore, on proceeding against those who were implicated, as I was authorized to do by the attributes which I possessed; if any person dispute their extent, he may see them defined in the 170th article of the Spanish Constitution, which so far was in force *. On the 26th of August †, I ordered the apprehension of the deputies who were comprised in the denunciations, and charged with being conspirators ‡. In order to see if that charge

* “The power of causing the laws to be executed resides exclusively in the King; and his authority extends to every thing which conduces to the conservation of public order at home, and to the security of the state against any foreign attack, conformably to the constitution and the laws.”—Article 170 of the Spanish Constitution.
† 1822.

‡ Those who were most urgent with me to arrest the deputies, those who at that time did nothing less than implore that capital punishment should be inflicted on the prisoners, those who communicated the orders and executed them,—are the same persons who have been most conspicuous in the last revolution, and were among the earliest converts to Republicanism. Santana has, in person and by writing, importuned me a thousand times to dissolve the Congress, offering to go himself and expel the deputies from the hall at the point of the bayonet. Echavarri arranged the places where they were to be arrested, and, through the officers of his regiment, executed the order of arrest against several deputies. Negrete some time before told me that it was necessary for me to take my resolution, for that the Congress was an obstacle to the public happiness. Calvo took the summary (su-

were founded on circumstances sufficient, in point of law, to sustain it, and whether I had reason to urge me to take a step which has been called violent and despotic, reference must be made to the report of the Fiscal of the *Sumaria* *, which was approved in all its parts by the Council of State †.

The Congress demanded, in an imperious manner, that the deputies should be given up to them, and required to be informed of the causes of their detention, in order that they might be tried by the tribunal of Cortes. I resisted giving them up until the *Sumaria* was concluded, and until it was

maria) of the proceedings, and communicated it to Brigadier Pares: and all, or almost all, these hastened to congratulate me on the important service which I had rendered the country.

* The *Sumaria* is equivalent to the *Procès verbal* in France, or to the examinations before a magistrate in England, with the exception that, in the latter country, the accused is not obliged to give evidence against himself. — *Translator*.

† One of the Councillors of State, who approved of the Fiscal's report, a copy of which will be found among the documents, No. VIII., was the Brigadier Bravo, now a member of the executive power, and who was one of the leading chiefs of the late revolution; one of the pretexts put forward for which, is the detention of the deputies.

decided by what tribunal they were to be tried. I could not agree that they should be sent before the tribunal just mentioned, which was composed of individuals of the Congress, who were suspected of being connected with the conspiracy. They were, besides, partial members of an assembly, the majority of which was in bad repute; and which, amongst other proofs of its bad faith, had treated with indifference the disclosures which I had made to it on the 3d of April, respecting the secret manœuvres of some of their own body*.

The interval, until the 30th of October, was spent in mutual contention. At that period the discontent of the people increased, and they threatened to put an immediate end to their sufferings which had been so much abused; the public writers repeated their invectives against the Congress with more vehemence than ever, and the provinces refused to contribute to the stipends of

* On that occasion, those who were comprehended in the disclosures here alluded to, evinced such a want of delicacy as to attend at the sitting; amongst them was the then President.

delegates, who did not discharge the duties intrusted to them *. The national representation had already brought itself into contempt, by its apathy in all that related to the public welfare, by its activity in creating evils, by its insufferable insolence, and by its permitting some of its members to maintain in public sittings, that no respect was due to the plan of Iguala, or the treaty of Cordova, although they had sworn to observe both upon their admission into the sanctuary of the laws, and although those documents formed the basis given them by their constituents for the guidance of their conduct.

They endeavoured at that time merely to depre-

* The deputies, who had no other subsistence than their stipends, although they were assisted from the general treasury with considerable sums besides, on condition of re-payment, lived, nevertheless, in poverty, and involved in debt. Those who possessed landed property, or other income, sufficient for their subsistence, did not disdain to receive the stipends from their respective provinces, when the latter could contribute them; and they received also the sums which were distributed from the stock of the treasury, thus proving how little they were actuated by generosity, or by a desire to promote the general welfare either of the community at large, or of the particular body to which they belonged.

ciate the plan of Iguala, because they could do no more, while I supported it as the expression of the will of the people. But since my abdication, they have not been content with speaking against it ; relying on a mere sophism they have annulled one of its fundamental principles, and under the pretence of doing away with the invitation given to the Bourbons, they have abolished the limited monarchy altogether. What connexion was there between one and the other? On the 8th of April, 1823, the congress passed a decree, in which * they declared that the plan of Iguala, and the treaties of Cordova ceased to have force, as to those parts which referred to the form of government, and the calling in of the Bourbons, and that the nation was fully at liberty to constitute itself. In fact, those documents had already ceased to have force as to that portion which the Congress annulled, relating to the invitation given to the Bourbons ; but they lost their effect thus far, not because such was the will of the people, when conferring their powers on the deputies, but because the government of Ma-

* See a literal copy of this decree and declaration in the Appendix, No. VI. and VII.

drid did not choose to ratify the treaty signed by O Donoju, nor to accept the invitation which the Mexicans freely offered to that family. It was not competent to the congress to say that at no time did there exist any right to bind the Mexican nation by any law or treaty, except through the nation itself, or its representatives. For although the proposition, taken by itself, is true, it is false if it be taken with reference to the plan of Iguala and the treaty of Cordova; first, because both were the expression of the general will of the Mexicans, as I have already said, and secondly, because the powers which were conferred on the deputies* as well as their oath†, were founded on the principles, and supported on the bases, of both these documents. They were instructed by their constituents to organize the government of the empire, as to its fundamental bases, conformably to the plan of Iguala, and the treaty of Cordova. If, therefore, these bases were not conformable to what the public right of every free nation requires, whence did the deputies derive their authority to create a Congress, and whence could

* See Appendix, No. IX.

† Appendix, No. X.

such a body have received its attributes of legislation? Numerous are the decrees of that assembly, which evince a similar absence of discernment. They might have very properly said that the invitation given to the Bourbons was null, because those princes declined to accept it. But to assert that, therefore, the plan of Iguala and the treaty of Cordova were null, in every part, is the extreme of absurdity. And it is the extreme of ignorance or of malice to add, that the legislative body could not be bound to adhere to the basis of that form of government, which was considered most expedient by those who gave to the congress its existence as a Congress. If that assembly had known its duty, and had proceeded with honour and good faith, it would have respected the plan of Iguala as the source of its own authority, and the foundation of the edifice of the state. But it took an opposite course.

For such an abuse of their authority as this, no palliation was sufficient, and no remedy could be found. Such a congress neither could nor ought to continue. This was not only my opinion, but that of every

This was not only my opinion, but that of every one whom I consulted on the subject, particularly of a meeting which I held publicly in my palace, and to which I summoned such persons as were most distinguished by the respectability of their character, the ministers, the council of state, the generals and other superior officers, and seventy-two deputies.

On the 30th of October, I transmitted a despatch to the president of the congress through a superior officer, informing him that that body had ceased to exist*, and without any other formality, without violence or further occurrence of any sort, the congress was closed at noon on that day. No person sympathized with them in their fall; on the contrary, I received congratulations from all quarters, and in consequence of this proceeding I was again

* This despatch was delivered into the president's hand by the Brigadier Cortazar, who at that time expressed his thanks for having been honoured with such a commission. It was he who shut the doors of the edifice, after which he returned highly satisfied with having performed a task, which was so agreeable to him. He was one of the first who declared for the republic.

called the “Liberator of Anahuac,” and “the father of the people.”

In order that a body so respectable by its institution should not be entirely wanting to its duty, and lest it should be supposed that I arrogated to myself the power of making the laws, I formed the same day, an assembly which I called the “Instituent Junta,” consisting of members of the Congress, and selected from all the provinces. They amounted to forty-five in number, exclusive of eight supplemental deputies.

All of these had been elected by their respective provinces, and for all the provinces there were representatives. Their duty was confined to the formation of a new convocatoria, and they exercised the functions of the legislative power only in cases of urgent necessity. They understood that with respect to the convocatoria, they were to avoid those defects which the first junta of government had interwoven in it, and particularly to attend to the rights of the people to whom they were to

leave the full measure of their liberty, and whom they were, at the same time, to protect as much as possible from the intrigues and cabals of those who would not hesitate to abuse their simplicity.

Happily so far my measures were attended with general approbation, and I also received congratulations on the installation of the “Instituent Junta.”

At this period the empire was tranquil, the government was actively engaged in consolidating the public prosperity, and our interior grievances were removed. It only remained for us to get possession of the castle of S. Juan de Ulua, the sole point which was in the possession of the Spaniards, and which commanded Vera Cruz; its garrisons were relieved by troops from the Havannah, and on account of its proximity to the island of Cuba, it offered every possible advantage to an internal enemy.

The Brigadier Santana commanded the fortress

of Vera Cruz, and was commandant-general of the province, under Echavarri, who was its captain-general. Both of these had instructions relative to the capture of the castle ; some jealousies arose between them concerning their respective authority, which they carried to such an extreme, that the former attempted to have the latter assassinated during a sortie made by the Spaniards ; for which purpose he had so well concerted his measures, that Echavarri, according to his own account, owed his life to the bravery of a dozen soldiers, and to a panic which seized those who attacked him. In consequence of this circumstance, added to the repeated complaints against Santana, which I received from the former captain-general, from the provincial deputation, from the consulate, from a number of the inhabitants, from the lieutenant-colonel of the corps which he commanded, and from several officers, who expressed themselves strongly against his arbitrary and insolent conduct as a governor, I was under the necessity of divesting him of his command. I had conferred it upon him, because I thought he possessed valour ; a virtue which

I esteem in a soldier, and I hoped that the rank in which I had placed him, would correct his defects, with which I was not unacquainted. I also hoped that experience, and an anxiety not to displease me, would have brought him to reason. I confirmed to him the rank of lieutenant-colonel which the last viceroy had given him by mistake, I bestowed on him the cross of the order Guadalupe, I gave him the command of one of the best regiments in the army, the government of a fortress of the greatest importance at that period, the appointment of brigadier (con letras), and made him the second chief of the province. I had always distinguished him, nor did I on this occasion wish that he should be disgraced. I intimated to the minister that the order of recall should be framed in complimentary terms, and accompanied by another summoning him to court, where his services were required for the execution of a mission which he might consider as a promotion.

All this, however, was not sufficient to restrain his volcanic passions ; he felt bitterly offended, and

determined to revenge himself on the individual who had heaped benefits upon him. He flew to excite an explosion at Vera Cruz, where the intelligence of his having lost his command had not yet arrived, and where a great part of the inhabitants are Spaniards, who exercise great influence on account of their wealth, and are averse to the independence of the country, because it put an end to that exclusive commerce which was the inexhaustible source of their riches, to the prejudice of other nations, including that of Mexico itself, from which they demanded and obtained such prices as they pleased. There it was that Santana proclaimed a republic. He flattered the officers with promotions, he deluded the garrison with promises, he took the respectable portion of the inhabitants by surprise, and intimidated the neighbouring towns of Alvarado and Antigua, as well as the people of colour in the adjacent hamlets. He attempted also to surprise the town of Talapa, and was defeated with the loss of all his infantry and artillery, and the total route of his cavalry, who saved themselves only by the fleetness of

their horses. Whilst Santana was attacking Talapa, the towns of Alvarado and Antigua placed themselves again under the protection of the government.

This was the proper moment for putting an end to the rebellion, and punishing the traitor. General Echavarri and Brigadier Cortazar, who commanded strong divisions, and had been directed to pursue him, might have taken the fortress of Vera Cruz without any resistance; and by placing themselves between it and Santana, might have captured the whole of the remains of the cavalry that could have rallied; but nothing was done.

The affair of Talapa undeceived those who had afforded any credit to the delusive promises of Santana; he was now shut up within the fortress of Vera Cruz and the imperial bridge, a position truly military; which was defended by two hundred mulattoes, under the command of Don Guadalupe Victoria*. Being thus confined to the fortress, he

* His name was Don Felix Fernandez; but when he joined in the former insurrection, he voluntarily adopted that of Gua-

shipped his baggage and made arrangements for his own escape by sea, as well as for that of such of his companions as were committed in his cause, who were all prepared to fly the moment they should be attacked.

Although the apathy of Echavarri should have been perhaps, a sufficient cause for exciting distrust as to his fidelity, it was not so with me, because I had formed the highest opinion of him. Echavarri had experienced from me the greatest proofs of friendship; I treated him like a brother; I had raised him from insignificance in the political career to the high rank which he enjoyed; I was as unserved with him as if he were my son; and it pains me now to be compelled to speak of him, because his actions do him no honour.

dalupe Victoria. He possesses the virtue of consistency; for, although he gained no advantage with his guerillas in favour of the country, he never sought to profit by the general pardon. With the assistance of a few of his friends, he maintained himself wandering through the mountains. The last government, after my abdication of the supreme command, gave him the title of General, without designating his rank; and the Congress nominated him a member of the executive power.

I gave orders for the siege of the fortress, I authorized the General to act according to his own discretion, on such occasions as he deemed necessary, without waiting for instructions from the government. Troops, artillery, provisions, ammunition, and money, were supplied him in abundance, the garrison was dismayed; the officers were determined to fly; the walls, low and feeble, offered every facility for an assault, if he did not wish to open a breach, which might have been effected in any direction in the course of an hour. Notwithstanding all these advantages, only a few skirmishes took place, and the siege lasted till the 2d of February, when the convention of Casa Mata was agreed to; in consequence of which, the besiegers and the besieged united together for the re-establishment of the Congress, the only object which, as they then said, they had in view*.

The fault which I think I committed in my government was, that I did not assume the command of the army the moment I had reason to suspect the

* See Appendix, No. XI.

defection of Echavarri. I deceived myself by reposing too much confidence in others. I now feel that to a statesman, such a disposition is always injurious, because it is impossible to fathom the depth to which the perversity of the human heart descends *.

It has been already seen, that it was not love for his country which actuated Santana in raising his voice for a Republic; let the world judge also, if it was the feeling of a patriot which guided the conduct of Echavarri, knowing, as he did, that at that period commissioners had arrived at S. Juan de Ulua from the Spanish government, for the purpose

* Echavarri was captain of a provincial regiment, forgotten by the Viceroy and buried in the obscurity of one of the worst districts of the Viceroyalty. In little more than a year, I raised him to the rank of Field Marshal, Knight (de numero) of the Imperial Order of Guadaloupe, one of my Aids-de-camp, and Captain-General of the provinces of Puebla, Vera Cruz, and Oajaca. This Spaniard was one of those upon whom I heaped marks of my favour, and also one of those whom I destined to form a link of that fraternal union, which I always hoped to establish between the Americans and the inhabitants of the Peninsula, as being mutually advantageous to both countries.

of *pacifying* that part of America, which it considered to be in a state of rebellion. Echavarri entered into a correspondence with them; and with the governor of the castle; he suddenly forgot his natural resentment against Santana, and joined with him in opinion; he forgot the friendship which I had shewn him; he forgot the duty which he owed to the Mexicans; he forgot even his honour, in order to accept the system of a man who was not only his public, but his personal, enemy; and by entering into a capitulation with him, though at the time in command of superior numbers, he crowned his disgrace, and brought a stain upon his character, which no lapse of time can remove. Can it be, that Echavarri, remembering his native land, wished to render his countrymen such a service, as might expiate his former conduct? I shall pass no judgment upon him. Let those do it who cannot be charged with partiality.

After the convention of Casa Mata, the besiegers and the besieged united, and rushed like a torrent over the provinces of Vera Cruz and Puebla, without paying any regard to the government, or the

least respect to me, although it was expressly stipulated that a copy of the convention should be sent to me by a commission. This commission was reduced to one officer, who arrived when the whole army was in motion, and when every point was taken possession of, which the time allowed, without waiting to know if I wholly or partly approved, or rejected that convention. It was also expressly provided in that act, that no attempt should be made against my person or authority.

The Marquis de Vivanco commanded the provinces of Puebla *ad interim*. He also was one of those who had experienced my favour. He never was, nor ever can be, a Republican ; he abhorred Santana personally, and he was hated by the army as being an anti-independent, and on account of a certain want of frankness in his character. Notwithstanding all this, Vivanco joined the rebels, and Puebla refused to obey the government.

I went out to take a position between Mexico and the rebels, for the purpose of reducing them without violence, by agreeing to every thing which

was not incompatible with the public good. I resolved to draw a veil over the past, and to put out of the question every thing relating personally to myself. We agreed that a new Congress should be convened, the Convocatoria for which had been already settled on the 8th of December, by the Instituent Junta, and was printed and about to be issued*. Limits were fixed to the troops on both sides, and it was stipulated that they should remain within their lines, until the national representation should meet and decide the question, all parties agreeing to submit to its determination. Such was the agreement entered into with the commissioners whom I had sent for that purpose ; but those on the other side violated the stipulations into which they had entered, by despatching emissaries to the provinces, for the purpose of persuading them to abide

* The convention of Casa Mata did not take place till the 2d of February. At the beginning of December, the Convocatoria for the new Congress was finally arranged. Hence it is evident, in the first place, that I had no design of assuming the legislative power ; and secondly, that the assemblage of the body which was to exercise it, was not the true reason of raising the siege of Vera Cruz, and of proceeding to frame the above mentioned convention.

by the Act of Casa Mata. Several of the provincial deputations did accede to it ; but at the same moment that they did so, they expressed a resolution to respect my person, and to resist any attempt that might be made against me, notwithstanding the arts and menaces which were used in order to change the current of their feelings.

It has been said that I wished to assume absolute power : I have already demonstrated the falsehood of this charge. I have been accused, also, of enriching myself from the public treasury, although at this moment I have no other dependence than the property which has been assigned to me ; and if there be any man who knows that I have funds in any foreign bank, I hereby cede them to him, that he may make such use of them as he thinks fit.

The best proof that I have not enriched myself, is that I am not rich ; I have by no means so much as I possessed when I undertook to establish the independence of my country. I not only did not misapply the public funds, but I have not even re-

ceived from the treasury the sums which were granted to me. The first Junta of provisional government made an order, that a million of dollars should be paid to me out of the property of the extinct Inquisition, and also assigned to me twenty square leagues of territory in the inland provinces. I have not received from these resources a single real. The Congress passed a decree that all my expenses should be supplied by the treasury to whatever extent I should require, and the Instituent Junta granted me an annual income of a million and a half of dollars. I received no more than was barely necessary for my subsistence, and this was drawn in small sums by my steward, every four or six days, preferring always the exigencies of the State to my own and those of my family. I may mention another circumstance, which shews that self-interest is not my passion. When the Instituent Junta granted me the annuity of a million and a half of dollars, I appropriated the third part of that sum to the formation of a bank, which might contribute to the encouragement and assistance of the mining trade, a principal branch of industry in

that country, but which had gone to ruin in consequence of the late convulsions. Regulations for the institution were drawn up by individuals experienced in the subject, and specially commissioned for the purpose.

As little did I enrich any of my relatives by giving them lucrative employments. I listened to no private influence ; those who obtained official situations through me, obtained them as matter of justice in the scale of promotion, or through the consequences of the revolution, according to the rank in which they stood when the government was changed, without their situation being at all improved by my elevation to the throne*.

It has been said that I acted arbitrarily by imprisoning some of the deputies of Congress, and

* A brother-in-law of mine, was Alcalde in Valladolid, at the period of the events of Igaula. A political Chief was wanted, and the Spanish Constitution called upon him to exercise the functions of this office. He continued to discharge them up to the time of my entry into Mexico, when he was confirmed in his office by the Regency, as were also the political Chiefs of Puebla, Quere-taro and other places, who had no sort of relationship to me.

afterwards suspending it. To this charge I have already answered. It has been alleged, too, that I paid no respect to property, because I made use of the convoy of specie, amounting to one million two hundred thousand dollars, which left Mexico, bound for the Havannah, in October 1822. At that time the Congress had been strongly pressed by the government to supply the means for meeting the exigencies of the State, and it gave me authority to appropriate to that purpose any existing fund. It informed me privately, through some of its members, that in adopting this measure, it had particularly in view the convoy in question ; but that it had made no allusion to it in the decree, because the promulgation of that document would warn the proprietors to abstract their respective shares, before the necessary orders could be issued. There were no means for the support of the army ; the public functionaries were without pay ; all the public funds were exhausted ; no loan could be obtained at home ; and those resources which might be solicited from abroad, required more time than the urgency of the moment could allow. At that

period a treaty was pending for a loan from England, and the negotiations had every appearance of a successful issue ; but they could not be concluded within five or six months at the least, and the necessities of the State were too pressing to be postponed.

At the same time, impressed as I always have been with the deep sense of the sacredness of private property, I should never have acceded to the wishes of the Congress, if I had not had good reason to believe that specie was remitted in that convoy for the Spanish government under fictitious names, and that almost the whole of it was intended for the Peninsula, where it would indisputably contribute to support the party which was opposed to the Mexicans. I trust that this will sufficiently appear to have been my view of the transaction, from the circumstance that all foreigners who could prove any part of those funds to belong to them, immediately obtained an order from me for its restitution. But even supposing (which, however, I cannot concede), that it was wrong to seize the

above-mentioned funds, to whom is the error to be attributed? Is it to be ascribed to me, who had no authority to levy contributions or loans, or to the Congress, which, in a period of eight months, had arranged no system of revenue, nor formed any plan of finance? Is it to be imputed to me, who could not avoid executing a peremptory law, or to the Congress which dictated it?

The act of Casa Mata fully justified my conduct in August and October, with respect to the Congress. The last revolution has only been the result of the plans which were then formed by the conspirators. They have not adopted a single step that varies from the *Sumaria*, which was taken at that time. The places where the cry of insurrection was first to be raised, the troops who were most deeply committed in the plot, the persons who were to direct the revolution, the manner in which I and my family were to be disposed of, the decrees to be passed by Congress, the kind of government which was to be established, all are to be found enumerated in the declarations and results of the *Sumaria*. Neither

the imprisonment of the deputies, nor the reform of the Congress, nor the seizure of the convoy, were the true causes of the late revolution.

I repeatedly solicited a private interview with the principal dissenting chiefs, without being able to obtain anything more than one answer in a private note from Echavarri. Their guilt prevented them from facing me ; their ingratitude confounded them.— They despaired of receiving indulgence from me, (which was another proof of their weakness,) although they were not ignorant that I was always ready to pardon my enemies, and that I never availed myself of my public authority to avenge personal wrongs.

The events which occurred at Casa Mata united the republican and the Bourbon parties, who never could agree but for the purpose of opposing me. It was as well, therefore, that they should take off the mask as soon as possible, and make themselves known, which could not have happened if I had not given up my power. I re-assembled the Con-

gress, I abdicated the crown, and I requested permission, through the minister of relations, to exile myself from my native country *.

I surrendered my power, because I was already free from the obligations which irresistibly compelled me to accept it. The country did not want my services against foreign enemies, because at that time it had none. As to her domestic foes, far from being useful in resisting them, my presence might have proved rather prejudicial to her than otherwise, because it might have been used as a pretext for saying that war was made against my ambition, and it might have furnished the parties with a motive for prolonging the concealment of their political hypocrisy. I did not abdicate from a sense of fear ; I know all my enemies, and what they are able to do. With no more than eight hundred men I undertook to overthrow the Spanish Government in the northern part of the continent, at a moment when it possessed all the resources of a long-established government, the

* See Appendix, No. XII.

whole revenue of the country, eleven European expeditionary regiments, seven veteran regiments, and seventeen provincial regiments of natives, which were considered as equal to troops of the line, and seventy or eighty thousand royalists; who had firmly opposed the progress of Hidalgo's plot. Had I been actuated by fear, would I have exposed myself to the danger of assassination, as I did, by divesting myself of every means of defence?

Nor was I influenced in my resignation by an apprehension that I had lost any thing in the good opinion of the people, or in the affection of the soldiers. I well knew that at my call the majority of them would join the brave men who were already with me, and the few who might waver would either imitate their example, after the first action, or be defeated. I had the greater reason to depend on the principal towns, because they had themselves consulted me with respect to the line of conduct which they ought to pursue under the circumstances of the moment, and had declared that they would do

no more than obey my orders which were that they should remain quiet, as tranquillity was most conducive to their interests as well as to my reputation. The memorials from the towns will be found in the ministry of state and the captaincy-general of Mexico, together with my answers, which were all in favour of peace and against bloodshed.

[My love for my country led me first to Iguala, it induced me to ascend the throne and to descend again from so dangerous an elevation ; and I have not yet repented either of resigning the sceptre or having proceeded as I have done.] I have left the land of my birth after having obtained for it the greatest of blessings, in order to remove to a distant country, where I and a large family, delicately brought up, must exist as strangers, and without any other resources than those which I have already mentioned* ; together with a pension, upon which no man would place much dependence, who knows what revolutions are, and is acquainted with the state in which I left Mexico.

* See page 79.

There will not be wanting persons who will charge me with a want of foresight, and with weakness in re-instating a Congress, of whose defects I was aware, and the members of which will always continue to be my determined enemies. My reason for so acting was this, that I should leave in existence some acknowledged authority, because the convocation of another Congress would have required time, and circumstances did not admit of any delay. Had I taken any other course, anarchy would inevitably have ensued, upon the different parties shewing themselves, and the result would have been the dissolution of the state. It was my wish to make this last sacrifice for my country.

To this same Congress I preferred a request that it would fix the place where it wished me to reside, and select such troops as it might think proper to form the escort that was to attend me to the place of embarkation. It fixed on a point in the bay of Mexico for my embarkation, and gave me for escort five hundred men, whom I wished to be taken from among those that had seceded from

their allegiance to me, and to be commanded by the Brigadier Bravo, whom I also selected from my opponents*, in order to convince them that he who now surrendered his arms, and placed himself in the hands of those persons whose treachery he had already experienced, had not avoided meeting them in the field through any personal fear.

On the day fixed for my departure from Mexico, the people prevented me from leaving it. When the army calling itself (for what reason it knew not) the liberating army, made its entry, there were none of those demonstrations which usually evince a favourable reception. The superior officers were obliged to post the troops through the capital, and to plant artillery at the principal approaches. In the towns through which I passed, (which were but a few, as it was so managed that I should be con-

* Of the troops who were then with me at Tacubaya, I took with me only two men from each company, and this I did merely for the purpose of giving them a proof of my gratitude, and to appease the enthusiasm of the rest. It was the only means by which I could persuade them to let me proceed with the escort which had been appointed by the Congress.

ducted with as much privacy as possible from one hacienda* to another,) I was received with ringing of bells, and notwithstanding the harshness with which they were treated by my escort, the inhabitants crowded anxiously to see me, and to bestow upon me the most sincere proofs of their attachment and respect.

After my departure from Mexico, the new government was obliged to resort to force in order to prevent the people from crying out my name ; and when the Marquis of Vivanco, as General-in-Chief, harangued the troops whom I left at Tacubaya, he had the dissatisfaction to hear them shout “ live Agustin the First ! ” and to see that they listened to his address with contempt. These, and a thousand other incidents which might appear too trifling if they were particularized, fully demonstrate that it was not the general will which effected my separation from the supreme command.

* A hacienda means in English an estate, but an estate in Mexico consists generally of a large tract of territory, which is thinly settled by the proprietor for his agricultural purposes.

I had already said that the moment I should discover that my continuance at the head of affairs tended to interrupt the public tranquillity, I should cheerfully descend from the throne; and that if the nation should choose a form of government which in my view might be prejudicial, I would not contribute to its establishment, because it is not consistent with my principles to act contrary to what I think conducive to the general welfare. But on the other hand, I added, that I would not oppose it, and that my only alternative would be to abandon my country. I said this in October, 1821, to the first junta of government; and I repeated it frequently to the Congress*, to the Instituent Junta, to the troops, and to several individuals, both in private and in public. The case for which I had provided arrived; I complied with my word, and I have only to thank my enemies for having afforded me an opportunity of

* I always spoke with frankness to the Congress; witness my address to that body, after it was re-instated on my resignation of the throne. See Appendix, No. XIII.

unequivocally shewing that my language was always in unison with my intentions *.

The greatest sacrifice which I made, has been that of abandoning for ever a country so dear to my heart, which still retains an idolized father whose advanced age rendered it impossible to bring him with me, a sister whom I cannot think of without regret, and kinsmen, and many a friend who were the companions of my infancy and youth, and whose converse formed in better days the happiness of my life !

Mexicans! this production will reach your hands.

* Conformably to my principles, I refused to place myself at the head of the last revolution, though I was invited to do so by its principal leaders; amongst whom it will be sufficient to mention Negrete, Cortazar, and Vivanco. Had I acted according to their suggestion, I might have retained the supreme command under one name or another; and if I were actuated by ambition I would have done so. Circumstances afforded me many opportunities of accomplishing any ambitious purpose, but public affairs became hateful to me; my duties oppressed me; and, finally, I thought it inconsistent with the interests of my country that I should place myself at the head of that party.

Its principal object is to shew you that your best friend has never deceived the affection and confidence which you prodigally bestowed upon him. My gratitude to you shall cease only with my latest breath. When you instruct your children in the history of our common country, tell them betimes to think with kindness of the first Chief of the army of the Three Guarantees ; and if by any chance my children should stand in need of your protection, remember that their father spent the best season of his life in labouring for your welfare ! Receive my last adieus, and may every happiness await you !

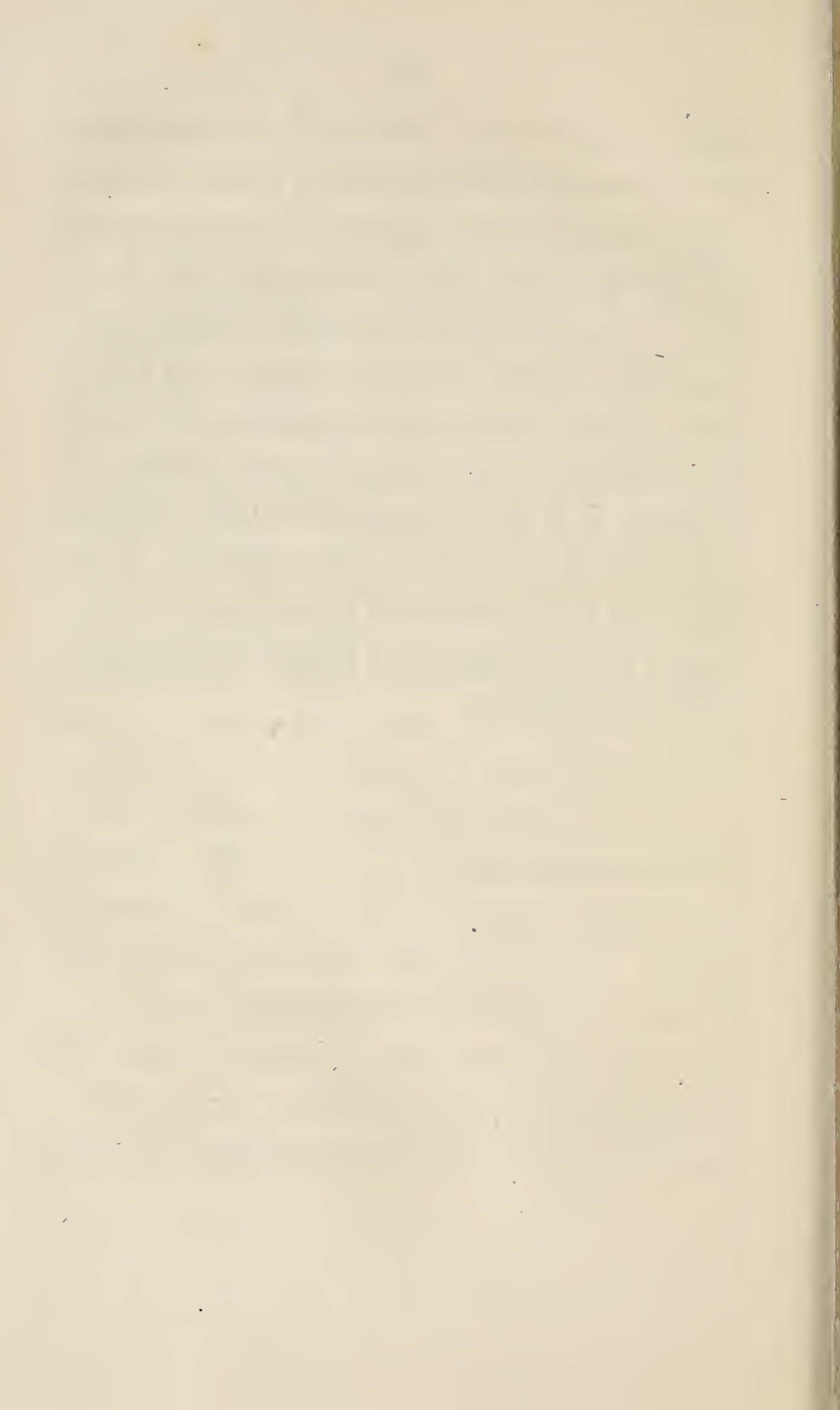
*At my country-house in the vicinity
of Leghorn, 27th Sept. 1823.*

POSTSCRIPT.

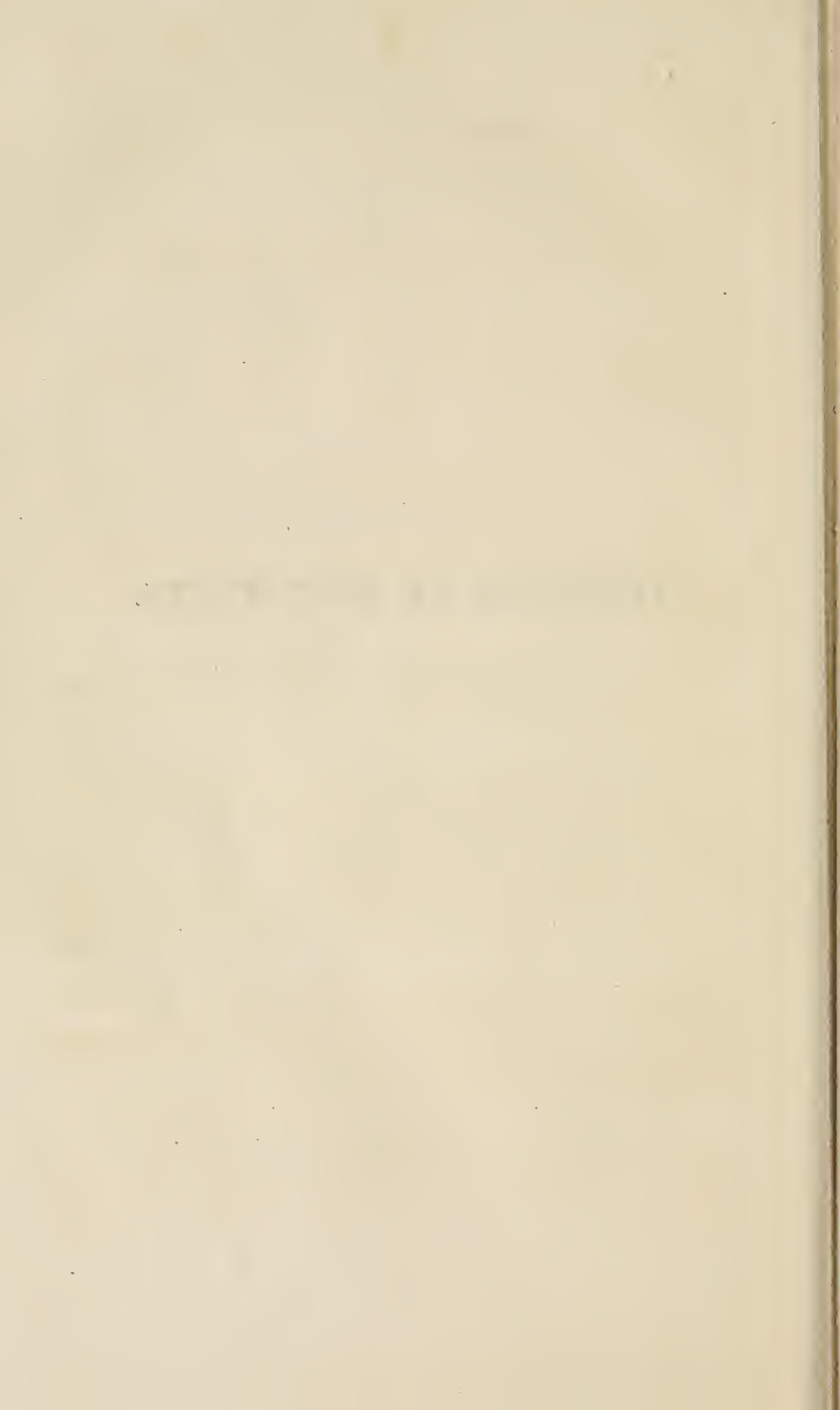
Not having been allowed, as I had intended, to print this work in Tuscany, the time that has elapsed since I finished it, has afforded me an opportunity to observe that the events which have taken place in Mexico, since my departure, fully confirm every thing which I have said with respect to the Congress. It has been seen endeavouring to prolong the term of its functions, in order to engross all the different branches of power, and to form a constitution according to its own pleasure ; a proceeding inconsistent with the limited authority which has been delegated to it, and demonstrative of its contempt for the public voice, and for the decisive representations addressed to it from the provinces, desiring that it should confine itself to the formation of a new convocatoria. Hence, it has happened that the provinces, in order to force the Congress to compliance, have taken such strong steps as even with force of arms to refuse to obey its ordinances, and those of the government

which it has created. This fact is an unequivocal proof of the bad opinion which the people entertain of the majority of the deputies. A new Congress necessarily requires time and expense ; and, therefore, it may be inferred, that the people never would have adopted the idea of forming such a Congress, if they looked upon the majority of the present deputies as wise, temperate, and virtuous legislators, or if the proceedings of those deputies, since their re-instatement in the sanctuary of the laws, had been conformable to the general welfare, instead of being subservient to their own ambitious and sinister designs.

London, January, 1824,



APPENDIX OF DOCUMENTS.



APPENDIX OF DOCUMENTS.

No. I.

PLAN OF IGUALA.

ART. 1. The Mexican nation is independent of the Spanish nation, and of every other, even on its own Continent.

ART. 2. Its religion shall be the Catholic, which all its inhabitants profess.

ART. 3. They shall be all united, without any distinction between Americans and Europeans.

ART. 4. The government shall be a constitutional monarchy.

ART. 5. A junta shall be named, consisting of individuals who enjoy the highest reputation in the different parties which have shewn themselves.

ART. 6. This junta shall be under the presidency of his Excellency the Count del Venadito, the present Viceroy of Mexico.

ART. 7. It shall govern in the name of the nation, according to the laws now in force, and its principal business will be to convoke, according to such rules as it shall deem expedient, a congress for the formation of a constitution more suitable to the country.

ART. 8. His Majesty Ferdinand VII. shall be invited to the throne of the empire, and in case of his refusal, the Infantes Don Carlos and Don Francisco de Paula.

ART. 9. Should his Majesty Ferdinand VII. and his august brothers decline the invitation, the nation is at liberty to invite to the imperial throne any member of reigning families whom it may select.

ART. 10. The formation of the constitution by the congress, and the oath of the emperor to observe it, must precede his entry into the country.

ART. 11. The distinction of castes is abolished, which was made by the Spanish law, excluding them from the rights of citizenship. All the inhabitants of the country are citizens, and equal, and the door of advancement is open to virtue and merit.

ART. 12. An army shall be formed for the support of religion, independence, and union, guaranteeing these three principles, and therefore it shall be called the army of the three guarantees.

ART. 13. It shall solemnly swear to defend the fundamental bases of this plan.

ART. 14. It shall strictly observe the military ordinances now in force.

ART. 15. There shall be no other promotions than those which are due to seniority, or which shall be necessary for the good of the service.

ART. 16. This army shall be considered as of the line.

ART. 17. The old partisans of independence who shall immediately adhere to this plan, shall be considered as individuals of this army.

ART. 18. The patriots and peasants who shall adhere to it hereafter, shall be considered as provincial militiamen.

ART. 19. The secular and regular priests shall be continued in the state in which they now are.

ART. 20. All the public functionaries, civil, ecclesiastical, political, and military, who adhere to the cause of independence, shall be continued in their offices, without any distinction between Americans and Europeans.

ART. 21. Those functionaries, of whatever degree and condition, who dissent from the cause of independence, shall be divested of their offices, and shall quit the territory of the empire, taking with them their families and their effects.

ART. 22. The military commandants shall regulate

themselves according to the general instructions in conformity with this plan, which shall be transmitted to them.

ART. 23. No accused person shall be condemned capitally by the military commandants. Those accused of treason against the nation, which is the next greatest crime after that of treason to the Divine Ruler, shall be conveyed to the fortress of Barrabas, where they shall remain until the congress shall resolve on the punishment which ought to be inflicted on them.

ART. 24. It being indispensable to the country that this plan should be carried into effect, in as much as the welfare of that country is its object, every individual of the army shall maintain it, to the shedding (if it be necessary) of the last drop of his blood.

Town of Iguala,
24th February, 1821.

No. II.

TREATY OF CORDOVA.

Treaty concluded in the Town of Cordova on the 24th of August, 1821, between Don Juan O'Donnoju, Lieutenant-General of the Armies of Spain, and Don Augustin de Iturbide, First Chief of the Imperial Mexican Army of the "Three Guarantees."

New Spain having declared herself independent of the mother country ; possessing an army to support this declaration ; her provinces having decided in its favour ; the capital wherein the legitimate authority had been deposed being besieged ; the cities of Vera Cruz and Acapulco alone remaining to the European government ungarrisoned, and without the means of resisting a well directed siege of any duration, Lieut.-Gen. Don Juan O'Donnoju arrived at the first-named port in the character and quality of Captain General and first political chief of this kingdom, appointed by his most Catholic Majesty, and being desirous of avoiding the evils that necessarily fall upon the people in changes of this description, and of reconciling the interests of Old and New Spain, he invited the First Chief of the imperial army, Don Augustin de Iturbide to an interview in order to discuss the great question of independence, disentangling without destroying the bonds which had connected the two Continents. This interview took place in the town of Cordova, on the 24th of August, 1821, and the former under the character with which he came invested, and the latter as representing the Mexican empire, having

conferred at large upon the interests of each nation, looking to their actual condition and to recent occurrences, agreed to the following Articles, which they signed in duplicate, for their better preservation, each party keeping an original for greater security and validity.

1st. This kingdom of America shall be recognised as a sovereign and independent nation ; and shall, in future, be called the Mexican Empire.

2d. The government of the empire shall be monarchical, limited by a constitution.

3d. Ferdinand VII., catholic king of Spain, shall, in the first place, be called to the throne of the Mexican Empire, (on taking the oath prescribed in the 10th Article of the plan,) and on his refusal and denial, his brother, the most serene infante Don Carlos ; on his refusal and denial, the most serene infante Don Francisco de Paula ; on his refusal and denial, the most serene Don Carlos Luis, infante of Spain, formerly heir of Tuscany, now of Lucca ; and upon his renunciation and denial, the person whom the cortes of the empire shall designate.

4th. The emperor shall fix his court in Mexico, which shall be the capital of the empire.

5th. Two commissioners shall be named by his excellency Señor O'Donnoju, and these shall proceed to the court of Spain, and place in the hands of his Majesty king Ferdinand VII., a copy of this treaty, and a memo-

rial which shall accompany it, for the purpose of affording information to his Majesty with respect to antecedent circumstances, whilst the cortes of the empire offer him the crown with all the formalities and guarantees which a matter of so much importance requires ; and they supplicate his Majesty, that on the occurrence of the case provided for in Article 3, he would be pleased to communicate it to the most serene infantes called to the crown in the same article, in the order in which they are so named ; and that his Majesty would be pleased to interpose his influence and prevail on one of the members of his august family to proceed to this empire, inasmuch as the prosperity of both nations would be thereby promoted, and as the Mexicans would feel satisfaction in thus strengthening the bands of friendship, with which they may be, and wish to see themselves, united to the Spaniards.

6th. Conformably to the spirit of the “ Plan of Iguala,” an assembly shall be immediately named, composed of men the most eminent in the empire for their virtues, their station, rank, fortune, and influence ; men marked out by the general opinion, whose number may be sufficiently considerable to insure by their collective knowledge the safety of the resolutions which they may take in pursuance of the powers and authority granted them by the following articles.

7th. The assembly mentioned in the preceding article shall be called the “ Provisional Junta of Government.”

8th. Lieutenant-General Don Juan O'Donnoju shall be

a member of the Provisional Junta of Government, in consideration of its being expedient that a person of his rank should take an active and immediate part in the government, and of the indispensable necessity of excluding some of the individuals mentioned in the above Plan of Iguala, conformably to its own spirit.

9th. The Provisional Junta of Government shall have a president elected by itself from its own body, or from without it, to be determined by the absolute plurality of votes; and if on the first scrutiny the votes be found equal, a second scrutiny shall take place, which shall embrace those two who shall have received the greatest number of votes.

10th. The first act of the Provisional Junta shall be the drawing up of a manifesto of its installation, and the motives of its assemblage, together with whatever explanations it may deem convenient and proper for the information of the country, with respect to the public interests, and the mode to be adopted in the election of deputies for the cortes, of which more shall be said hereafter.

11th. The Provisional Junta of Government after the election of its president, shall name a regency composed of three persons selected from its own body, or from without it, in whom shall be vested the executive power, and who shall govern in the name and on behalf of the monarch till the vacant throne be filled.

12th. The Provisional Junta as soon as it is installed,

shall govern *ad interim* according to the existing laws, so far as they may not be contrary to the “Plan of Iguala,” and until the cortes shall have framed the constitution of the state.

13th. The regency immediately on its nomination, shall proceed to the convocation of the cortes in the manner which shall be prescribed by the Provisional Junta of Government, conformably to the spirit of Article No. 7, in the aforesaid “Plan.”

14th. The executive power is vested in the regency, and the legislative in the cortes; but as some time must elapse before the latter can assemble, and in order that the executive and legislative powers should not remain in the hands of one body, the junta shall be empowered to legislate; in the first place, where cases occur which are too pressing to wait till the assemblage of the cortes, and then the junta shall proceed in concert with the regency; and, in the second place, to assist the regency in its determinations in the character of an auxiliary and consultative body.

15th. Every individual who is domiciled amongst any community, shall, on an alteration taking place in the system of government, or on the country passing under the dominion of another prince, be at full liberty to remove himself, together with his effects, to whatever country he chooses, without any person having the right to deprive him of such liberty, unless he have contracted some obligation with the community to which he had belonged, by the commission of a crime, or by any other

of those modes which publicists have laid down ; this applies to the Europeans residing in New Spain, and to the Americans residing in the Peninsula. Consequently it will be at their option to remain, adopting either country, or to demand their passports, (which cannot be denied them,) for permission to leave the kingdom at such time as may be appointed before-hand, carrying with them their families and property ; but paying on the latter the regular export duties now in force, or which may hereafter be established by the competent authority.

16th. The option granted in the foregoing article shall not extend to persons in public situations, whether civil or military, known to be disaffected to Mexican independence ; such persons shall necessarily quits the empire within the time which shall be allotted by the regency, taking with them their effects after having paid the duties, as stated in the preceding article.

17th. The occupation of the capital by the Peninsular troops being an obstacle to the execution of this treaty, it is indispensable to have it removed. But as the Commander-in-Chief of the imperial army fully participating in the sentiments of the Mexican nation, does not wish to attain this object by force, for which, however, he has more than ample means at his command, notwithstanding the known valour and constancy of the Peninsular troops, who are not in a situation to maintain themselves against the system adopted by the nation at large, Don Juan O'Donnoju agrees to exercise his authority for the evacuation of the capital by the said troops

without loss of blood, and upon the terms of an honourable capitulation.

AGUSTIN DE ITURBIDE,
JUAN O'DONNOJU.

(A true copy.)

JOSE DOMINGUEZ.

*Dated in the Town of Cordova,
24th August, 1821.*

No. III.

DECREE OF THE CORTES AT MADRID.

In the Session of 13th February, the Extraordinary Cortes at Madrid approved of the following Articles.

1st. The cortes declare that what is styled the Treaty of Cordova between General O'Donnoju and the chief of the mal-contented of New Spain, Don Augustin de Iturbide, as well as any other act or stipulation involving the recognition of Mexican independence by the aforesaid General, are illegal, null, and void, as respects the Spanish government and its subjects.

2d. That the Spanish government by an official communication to all such powers as are in amicable relations with it, shall declare that the Spanish nation will at all times consider as a violation of existing treaties, the partial or absolute recognition of the independence of the Spanish American colonies, seeing that the dis-

cussions pending between some of them and the mother country are not yet concluded; and that the Spanish government in the fullest manner shall testify to foreign powers, that hitherto, Spain has not renounced any one of the rights which she possesses over the aforesaid colonies.

3d. That government be charged to preserve, by all possible means, and reinforce with all speed, those points in the American provinces which still remain united with the mother country, obedient to her authority, and opposed to the mal-contents; proposing to the cortes such resources as it may require, and which it has not at its own disposal.

No. IV.

ITURBIDE'S PROCLAMATION.

Mexicans! As a fellow-citizen desirous of the preservation of order, and anxious for your welfare infinitely more than for my own, I address myself to you. Political changes and alterations in the government of states produce no evils when the people are guided by that prudence and moderation which you have ever displayed.

The army and the inhabitants of this city have just taken a decisive step; to the rest of the nation it appertains either to approve or reject it. As for me, at this moment, I can do no more than feel grateful for their determination, and beg of you, yes, fellow-citizens, I

beseech you (for Mexicans need not my command,) to repress any violence of passion, to forget all resentments, and to respect the authorities; for a people without authorities, or which possessing, treads them under foot, is a monster. (Ah! let none of my friends incur the appellation!) Let us wait for a time of greater tranquillity before we irrevocably decide on our system and our destiny; it will speedily arrive. The whole nation is the country; its deputies this day represent it; let us hear them; let us not prove a scandal to the world; fear not that you shall be led astray by listening to my advice! The will of the people is the law; there is nothing superior to it. Listen to me, and give me this last proof of your attachment, which is all that I look for, and the height of my ambition. I dictate these words with my heart on my lips; do me the justice to believe me sincere and your best friend,

ITURBIDE.

No. V.

MANIFESTO OF THE CONGRESS.

The Constituent Congress to the Mexican Nation.

Mexicans! Your representatives address you for the first time, to announce to you the extraordinary event which has decided the destiny of the empire of Anahuac, whose emancipation is accomplished, since it has pleased the Supreme Being to restore to its inhabitants that liberty which he gave them at their birth, availing him-

self of an individual of extraordinary endowments in order to perfect the enterprise. You are all well acquainted with the “ Plan of Iguala,” with which Señor Don Augustin de Iturbide began this great work ; and also with the treaty of Cordova, celebrated between him and the Spanish General Don Juan O’Donnoju, which gave to that plan its perfection, although indeed, at the date of the treaty, the nation had already almost entirely formed its decision.

Events so propitious could not have taken place had they not been the result of the unanimity of public opinion, which, by reconciling jarring interests, renewed in our nature that love of liberty, the choicest gift of Heaven, of which no man can justly be deprived, much less a nation like our’s, which, after patiently enduring for three centuries, to its great detriment, a distant and inauspicious government, was still anxious, when throwing off its yoke, to be governed by its former kings and their family, calling them to the new throne of the empire of Mexico.

Conduct at once so open and so noble, ought not to have awakened the suspicions of the Spanish nation, but unfortunately, whilst you relied on the goodness of your intentions and the faith of a treaty, the Spanish government adopting a line of policy scarcely conceivable, looked upon the proceedings of the Mexicans as acts of infidelity and treason. Hence, their measures for augmenting the garrisons at the Havana and San Juan de Ulua, and their extensive military preparations in that fortress. Hence it is, that not content with continual

threats against your security and repose, their aggressions have gone so far as to raise (though in vain) against the empire those very troops who have already capitulated, and who are permitted to live in the country under the protection of treaties. They have even gone so far as to endeavour to seduce our illustrious chiefs by promises and threats, which have proved as unsuccessful as they were treacherous. Hence ultimately sprung that decree of the Spanish cortes in their session of the 12th and 13th February last, the object of which is to disavow the treaty of Cordova, and every other treaty whatsoever between the Spanish commanders and the governments of America, declaring all such acts to be null and of no effect ; and adding, that the government should acquaint all other powers that it would deem any total or partial recognition of our independence as a violation of treaties.

Such, Mexicans, has been the result of that moderation which is stamped on the pages of the famous " Plan " of the hero of Iguala ; such are the means which the Spanish government chooses to employ in its operations, to the great danger of the internal harmony and tranquillity of this country, by sowing the seeds of discord among you, and exciting suspicions against those citizens who have your liberties most at heart, on account of a difference of opinion as to the future conduct of Spain and of other European powers.

But this difference of sentiment, originating as it did in sound and healthy principles, gave great strength to

public opinion, when it was seen that Spain had annulled the treaty of Cordova ; and the army and people suddenly breaking silence at 11 o'clock on the night of the 18th instant, saluted the generalissimo Don Agustin de Iturbide as emperor of Mexico, solemnizing the proclamation with salutes of artillery, with music, and joybells, and passing the whole night in festivity. Señor Iturbide on the same night issued a proclamation, and at nine o'clock on the morning of the following day your congress assembled ; citizens of all classes thronging the avenues, and calling for an immediate confirmation of their choice.

The congress endeavoured to prepare, by all means in its power, for the discussion of so important a question, but the vehement cries of the people increasing every moment, convinced it of the necessity of taking into consideration the dignity and imprescriptible rights of the Mexican nation ; which, if it were generous enough to offer the throne to the reigning family of Spain, was very far from imagining that such an offer would have been flung back with disgrace and dishonour. Annulled therefore, as the treaty of Cordova was by that nation, the compact was broken, and the rights of those who were invited to the throne, according to the third Article, ceased, while the good faith of the Mexicans remained inviolate and pure. The congress was thus at full liberty to exert the powers marked out in the same article, the more especially if it be considered that when nations constitute themselves anew, no one possesses a legitimate title to obtain or solicit the supremacy of its

— government, but the person proclaimed by the will of the nation.

These principles are too manifest and clear to have remained hidden from the Spanish nation, which has known how to vindicate and compel the restoration of its natural rights which were usurped from it in the course of time by arbitrary power. And why ignorance should be pretended with reference to Mexican rights, by a government which is itself the offspring of an enlightened age, that does not permit tyranny, is beyond conception. Is it reasonable and just that the mother country should enjoy the plenitude of her rights and liberties, and that it should be denied to hapless America, to obtain such inestimable prerogatives, to which she is called by the maturity of her age, her position, her wishes, her interests, nay, even by the interests of Spain itself? And during such proceedings, useless perhaps to the nation that undertakes them, shall we allow ourselves to remain exposed to the dangerous vacillations of an unsettled form of government; shall we allow public opinion to remain divided, and the torch of discord to be kindled among us to the desolation of the unhappy land of Anahuac, which has been already scourged for twelve long years by intestine war?

No, Mexicans; your congress has determined to discharge the trust you have reposed in them in a manner more worthy of your confidence; and not to hesitate between the refusal of Spain on the one hand and the happiness of your country on the other. Looking to that great object in the first moment of their political exist-

ence, and anxious that their country should hold its rank among the great nations, they proclaimed Señor Don Agustín de Iturbide constitutional emperor thereof ; for as he had been the liberator of his country he would also be its best defender.

The gratitude of the nation demanded this ; the unanimous wishes of many towns and provinces long and imperatively called for it ; the people of Mexico and the army which occupied it, clearly and positively expressed the same sentiments.

The moderation of the hero of Iguala had previously discountenanced similar attempts from a faithful respect for the treaty which he had concluded ; after those attempts failed, if he still refused, even on the 19th to take upon him the arduous burthen of so exalted a station, his resistance would have been useless in proportion to the difficulty of concealing his virtues and his glory which had elevated him to such a station.

His love of liberty, his disinterestedness, his dexterity and political skill in uniting conflicting interests, his capability in affairs of state, were so many attractions to call forth your admiration, and to excite the interest and affection which you have professed for his person from the time he commenced his glorious career.

Mexicans, you have now on the imperial throne Iturbide the-Great, the object of your ardent wishes ; not to exercise over you an absolute authority such as

— was exercised by the ancient Spanish monarchs, but to perform towards you the kind offices of a father towards his children ; to administer the government according to the laws and constitution which your congress will dictate ;—to protect the weak ;—to cause equal justice to be administered ;—to preserve the integrity of the empire, and maintain in full force the Roman Catholic Apostolic religion without the toleration of any other. Thus hath he sworn this day before the great King of kings and of nations, setting forth in his speech to your representatives his abhorrence of tyranny, and his respect for the laws ; protesting in the most solemn manner his wish to die rather than to fail in duties so sacred, and proclaiming the principle of the sovereignty of the people ; and that the latter were not made for kings and princes, but princes and kings for them.

A compendious statement of this great event, together with its motives and the considerations attending it, has now been laid before you. The congress hopes that you will direct your most fervent prayers to heaven, that the individual elected may discharge his arduous duties under the protection of the most High.

The other nations will confess the justice and necessity which pointed out to the people of Mexico the way to guide them to the perfection of their government, in order to fix at once the destiny of this empire. And the Mexican nation disposed to recognise the rights of other countries, will not be deceived in its hopes ; for good faith and simple dealing being its polar star, these prin-

ciples will form the basis of its intercourse, and Spain herself will find amongst us her best allies, if adopting a line of policy equally useful to both nations, she recognises and respects our rights.

FRANCISCO CANTARINES, *President.*

JOSE YGNACIO GUTIERREZ, Deputy, } *Secretaries.*
FRANCISCO RIVAS, Deputy,

Mexico, 21st May, 1822,

In the 2d year of the independence of the empire.

No. VI.

DECREE OF CONGRESS.

The Sovereign Constituent Congress of Mexico at the Sitting of yesterday decreed the following:—

1st. That the coronation of Don Agustin de Iturbide having been the work of force and violence, and legally null, no discussion can take place upon his abdication of the crown.

2d. Consequently it declares also the hereditary succession and the titles emanating from the crown to be null; and that all acts of the government from the 19th May to the 29th March last are illegal, and subject to the revision of the present government, which may confirm or revoke them.

3d. The supreme executive power of Mexico will hasten the departure of Don Agustin de Iturbide from the territory of the nation.

4th. The embarkation shall take place from a port in the Gulf of Mexico, by a neutral vessel, to conduct him and his family at the expense of the state whithersoever he may wish.

5th. During the life of Don Agustin de Iturbide, he shall receive a pension of 25,000 dollars, (about 5,000*l.*) annually, payable in this capital, on condition that he establish his residence in some part of Italy. After his death his family will enjoy the sum of 8,000 dollars annually, according to the established regulations in such cases for military pensions.

6th. Don Agustin de Iturbide shall receive the title of Excellency.

The supreme executive power is to take due notice hereof, and is charged with the fulfilment of this decree, and to cause the same to be printed, published, and made known.

LICENCIADO JOSE MARIANO MARIN, *President.*

FLORENTINO MARTINEZ, Deputy, }
GABRIEL DE TORRES, Deputy, } *Secretaries.*

*Mexico, 8th April, 1823, the third year
of Independence, and the second of Liberty.*

To Don Jose Ygnacio Garcia Yllueca.

No. VII.

DECLARATION OF CONGRESS.

The Congress solemnly declares that at no time was there any right to bind the Mexican nation to subject itself to any law or treaty, unless by its own consent, or that of its representatives appointed according to the public right of free nations. Therefore the Plan of Iguala and the treaty of Cordova do not subsist as to the form of government and the invitation given ; and the nation is at full liberty to constitute itself according to the form of government that suits it best.

Mexico, 8th April, 1823.

No. VIII.

Official Report of the Fiscal Colonel Don Francisco de Paula Alvarez, on the Sumaria, which by order of the Government, he undertook against various individuals, of different classes, taken up on suspicion of being engaged in a conspiracy against the Government and the Emperor.

EXCELLENT SIR,

I this day forward to his excellency the captain-general of the province, the Sumaria, the formation of which was intrusted to me through your excellency by

command of his Majesty, in order to ascertain the facts which at the latter end of last August, gave rise to the imprisonment of various individuals of all classes suspected of treason. I have endeavoured to clear up the truth, as far as possible, without exceeding the limits of my commission, by assuming powers, which I have not received, and in the view I take of the case it only remains for me to submit to your Excellency the result of my inquiries.

The first thing to be done on these occasions, is to find out the criminal object in view, for if the conspiracy be not sufficiently known, the conspirators cannot be discovered. The information was so circumstantial, the documents and evidence brought before me led to disclosures so convincing, that government, without incurring the charge of apathy, indolence, or criminality, could not avoid taking immediate and efficacious measures, seeing that the public tranquillity was endangered.

The declaration of Don Lucian Velazques, folio 1, packet No. 1, that of Don Adrian Oviedo, folio 2, immediately following the former; the original letter of Don Anastasio Zerezero, folio 10, of the same packet, the minutes, folio 12, following the same, and the list of chiefs concerned in the affair in the continuation of these minutes, pointed out the way to the establishment of the criminal purpose. The second declaration of Don Jose Maria Bustamante, folio 22, in continuation of the aforesaid packet, and that of Don Jose Rafael Gonzalez, folio 17 of the same, afford a full and legal proof that the project of a conspiracy existed: this is sufficient to jus-

tify the government, considering its proceedings in the abstract; and indeed a sufficient justification appears in the documents already cited, even if we confine ourselves to those relating to individuals in particular. It was not sufficient that they should be merely named in an information, in order to warrant the apprehension of several of them, especially those who enjoy particular privileges, as happens to be the case with such as are deputies or ecclesiastics; but as the public safety is the first care of the government, as soon as it becomes endangered, all other reasons of prudence, circumspection, and even the fear of committing violence, ought to possess no influence. The man of virtue, if such he really be, and if he loves his country, sacrifices, on these occasions, his own particular rights, and cheerfully submits to the precautionary measures which are deemed necessary, whatever inconvenience may arise to his own person. And, in truth, many of these parties involved in the charge, are found to be privileged persons.

Against Doctor Mier is the evidence of the note written in his own hand-writing, in the paper called "The Friend of Peace," as found in folio 26, of packet No. 2; it is also a circumstance against him that he had attended two meetings, one of them in his own house, where the project of the conspiracy was discussed, with other circumstances relating thereto, which is proved by the declaration of Oviedo, folio 6 and 8 of packet No. 1, as also by that of Zerezero, folio 63 and 80, by Anaya, p. 82, and the subsequent pages, by the comparison of all these documents with each other, and of each of them with the said document, folios 37, 39,

40, 44, 49, and 50, packet No. 4. It is in evidence against him, (and this is the general charge against the whole of them) that he has impeded the course of justice, concealed the truth in his declarations, and evaded the first questions put to him. He at first denied that the note in the journal had any other object than mere curiosity; and when pressed upon the subject of the context, he gives a solution extremely unsatisfactory, page 27, packet 2. He knows not how this document in question got out of his possession, page 27, *ibid.*, and yet afterwards he is convicted of having sent it to Victoria, page 26, packet 4. In his declaration he denies any knowledge of the replies given to the questions of Oviedo, page 21, packet 2, and in his confrontation with this person, page 41, with Zerezero, page 45, packet 4, with Anaya, page 50, *ibid.*, he becomes convicted, and confesses that he was the author of them and that Zerezero had written them. He asserts in his declaration that he has held no correspondence on political subjects, and at folio 90, packet 2, he acknowledges the correctness of a copy of a letter written by him to his nephew Don Francisco de Mier, framed in alarming and revolutionary terms. He is ignorant that they had named a chief for the revolution, and yet in confronting him with Oviedo, Zerezero, and Anaya, pages 37, 43, and 49, packet 4, not only is he convicted but even confesses that he gave his vote to Anaya, and on this person refusing the nomination, he urged and begged him to agree to it, as appears from the deposition of Zerezero, fol. 63, packet 4. The paragraph copied in the examination, p. 90, from one of the letters opened in my presence, proves also that he held a mysterious correspon-

dence, in which he endeavoured to discredit the government.

The official letter of Don Manuel Rincon, page 1, packet 1, and the consequent steps taken in pages following, prove completely that from the time of his entering the empire, he endeavoured to spread the seeds of republicanism, and did every thing in his power to dispose the public mind towards it, and no excuse for those steps is derivable from what he states, folio 25 and 26, and repeats in p. 26, on the other side, packet No. 2, of having held such conversation previously to the election of the emperor, for it appears at p. 4 and 8, packet 1, that he already knew of the election, adding that he had been a free man but for one night: besides also the great notoriety of his opinions in favour of republicanism should justify his arrest. He also denied in his declaration, page 23, packet 2, his having confided in the assistance of his nephew Ugartechea, and his having expected to find an asylum in the house of Gallegos, whilst the first circumstance is proved, p. 39, packet 4, and the latter, p. 44, *ibid.* In a word, this priestly deputy has been one of the principal agents of the projected conspiracy, and has not told the truth which he had promised to speak under the solemn obligation of an oath. The declaration of lieut.-colonel Don Manuel Fernandez Aguado, p. 4, packet 2, should also be kept in mind with respect to this deputy.

Don Juan Pablo Anaya, likewise a member of the Congress, confesses in his declaration, p. 82, and the following pages, of packet 2, that he was one of the most

active of those bent on the projected scheme of altering the system, endeavouring to shew, notwithstanding his having confessed that his opinion was for a republican form of government, p. 83, packet 2, that his only object was to support the Congress, as if it were lawful for a citizen to form parties and clandestine meetings, with a view to the application of force, in any case already existing, or which might exist. And as if it could be said that a man acted rightly, who knows and yet conceals that in the provinces there are bodies disposed, and citizens labouring to subvert the established system of government. Such knowledge he possessed respecting the province of Puebla, p. 18, packet 4, of that of Vera Cruz, same page, and of some inland provinces, p. 65, packet 2. A man who confesses that he was invited to be the chief of a faction, by three or four others, to whom no other name can be given than that of revolutionists, and who at the same time acknowledges that he refused the command, fully evinces the idea which he must himself have entertained of such a nomination: even their very care in skreening themselves from the vigilance of the police in their meetings, shews clearly that they looked upon themselves as culprits. What was the purpose of the small triangular pieces of paper? See p. 20, packet 4, and p. 83, packet 2. And whence the fears for the near neighbourhood of the Licenciado Quintano? See p. 29, *ibid.* Why the assignation in the street of Trapaleros, at night, and why those precautions which are necessary only for a criminal? See p. 23, *ibid.* Why conceal the presentation of Oviedo, made by Zerezero, and the explanation of the object of his coming to the capital? See p. 82, packet 2. And

above all, what greater proof of a guilty conscience, than the information given to the artillery and different friends that the Congress was about to be surprised? See p. 21, packet 4. What clearer proof could be adduced than his concealing himself for many days, until he was unable longer to remain hidden from the vigilance of a zealous government? What stronger proof then could be given against him, than that it was necessary to extract the truth from him by the evidence of self-conviction? Analyze this man's declaration and compare it with those of the other witnesses, pp. 17, 22, 24, and 26, packet 4, and observe the discrepancies between the former and the latter. The declaration of lieutenant-colonel Don Manuel Fernandez Aguado, p. 22, packet 4, affords further evidence for condemning this individual. Before proceeding to take notice of other criminals, who are as greatly so as the two preceding persons, it seems to me proper to conclude my opinion respecting the deputies.

There is well grounded, or what the law terms cogent evidence against Don Carlos M. de Bustamante; a witness, (Oviedo, p. 17, packet 1) says that it was intended to form, in concert with Mier and Anaya, the plan of revolution, and this last in his confrontation, p. 23, packet 4, being pressed by the reasons of the former, and the minute indications which he gives of a secret understanding, alleges no reason to the contrary, but contents himself with a mere denial. On the other hand, M. Bustamante's opinion are so well known as to afford well-grounded suspicions to Government.

Don Juan de Dios Mayorga, is one of those cited by

the captain-general and political chief of Goatemala, p. 4, packet 2. This was sufficient to render him suspicious ; but he himself augments these suspicions by his official letter to the minister, in same page, wherein he styles himself diplomatic agent to a town in insurrection, and he cannot be considered in any other light than a spy.

Don Jose Joaquin de Herrera, was discovered by the letter of Zerezero, p. 10, packet 1 ; but this gentleman has given proofs, p. 79, and the following pages of packet 2, p. 29, and the following pages of packet 3, and p. 56, packet 4, respecting his correspondence, and his refusal upon frivolous pretexts, to submit to the orders of government, in matters of so much importance. Even had those pretexts any foundation, he might have reserved his right to use them in due time against the proper parties, without opposing on his part an obstacle to the steps which were taken for the discovery of the real offenders, in order to enable the authorities to inflict upon them immediate and ample justice. And as in these matters there are no minor degrees of offence, it follows according to my opinion, that M. Herrera is guilty. Supposing he may have in his favour the presumption to the contrary, he yet gives room for believing, (and this is the information given me), that he had knowledge of the intrigue, and between him and the other persons accused there is no difference, except that he was more fortunate in there being no *legal* proofs of his delinquency.

Don Jose del Valle has against him the exposition of

Don Juan Gomez de Goatemala, p, 4, packet 2 : he is no more than one witness, but he is unexceptionable on account of being a person employed by government, and he treats of public transactions, in which no one would expose himself to refutation, because he may be so easily contradicted. A man who has already put a province into convulsions, has no right to be considered among the number of peaceable citizens, lovers of virtue, and friends to good order. The government, therefore, was right in securing his person, at a moment that it entertained well-founded apprehensions of an approaching rebellion.

Fagoaga, Echenique, and Obregon are only named by Oviedo, who asserts that he heard Yturribarria say, that these would supply resources, p. 13, packet 1. The same witness, and with reference also to what he heard the same person say, names Mr. Fagle as one of the deputies whose influence he counted upon ; these are the only facts which appear throughout the Sumaria, and which prove nothing against them.

The other deputies had only against them one auricular witness, p. 17, packet 1. This was sufficient to justify their arrest, as a measure of precaution. Afterwards, in the course of the proceedings it appeared, p. 65, packet 2, from the declaration of Zerezero, p. 22, packet 4, and from Anaya in his confrontation with Oviedo, that their opinions had rendered them suspected by the government ; as, on that account, they had been marked out among the conspirators, as persons to be relied upon in the enterprise ; and if they merited such a reputation

among these latter, with what justice will they insist that the first witness should not have possessed the same opinion with regard to them? Don Luis Yturribarria was aware that Oviedo came, commissioned by the conspirators of Puebla, for the purpose of intriguing with respect to the revolution, through persons already acquainted with it; and to name a Chief to direct the enterprise. This appears from the deposition of Oviedo, p. 8, packet 1; from Zerezero's, p. 63, packet 2; and from his confession, p. 28, packet 4. In order to arrange the matter, he collected different persons at his house, p. 8, packet 1; at that of the honourable Santamaria, p. 8, *ibid.*; and in the street of Trapaleros, p. 9, *ibid.* These three meetings are proved: the first, by the accused, p. 30, packet 4; by the Licenciado Morales, p. 14; by Zerezero, pp. 8 and 9; and by Oviedo in his declaration: the second, by the same parties, except Morales, in the aforesaid pages: the third, by the same parties as the second, with the exception of Zerezero, and with the addition of Juan Pablo Anaya, p. 23. It appears, also, against the person in question, that he assisted Oviedo with a doubloon and five dollars for his journey to Puebla, and that he was to provide him with two trumpets and two thousand flints for the inhabitants of the plain of Apan, as appears from his confession, p. 30, packet 4, and from the deposition of Oviedo, pp. 9 and 10, of packet 1. Two witnesses, Oviedo, p. 13, packet 1, and Don Jose Joaquin Morales, p. 16, *ibid.*, affirm that he solicited ten or twelve thousand dollars in order to commence the revolution. Lastly, he has been guilty of perjury in his first declaration, pp. 10 and 79, packet 2; in which he knows nothing of the questions put to him, having been convicted

in his confrontations with others; and having ultimately confessed many circumstances, of which he first pleaded ignorance, p. 27 and the following, packet 4. He is, therefore, guilty.

Don Anastasio Zerezero has acknowledged himself the author of the letter to Don Luis Segura, p. 10, packet 1; in which the plot of the conspiracy, the object which they had in view, is discussed, together with the means of accomplishing it, p. 12, packet 2. Zerezero was the first person in Mexico who became acquainted with Oviedo's mission, p. 5, packet 1; and the man who introduced him to Mier, to the Licenciado Morales, to Yturribarria, and to Don Juan Pablo Anaya, p. 5, and the following, packet 1. Zerezero, in his letter, confesses himself a principal agent in the affair; and this individual, unlike all the others, having first declared himself an accomplice in the crime which gave rise to the present inquiry, in his confrontation with the others, manifested an extraordinary weakness in endeavouring to give a new colouring to his expressions, by interpreting his words in a different sense; finally convicted, however, by the force of truth, he was obliged to own the principal facts to be true, and that the obscure words made use of by him on the examination, were rightly to be understood against the person concerning whom he used them. Zerezero was immediately considered guilty; and he wished that his apprehension should have the appearance of a surrender. See the declaration of Don Tomas del Castillo, p. 47, packet 3; examinations of Señor Ascarate, and that of Don Rafael Gonzales, p. 40, *ibid.*

Don Juan Bautista Morales has against him his general character of republicanism, acquired by his publications. He confesses in his declaration, p. 46, packet 2, that this is the form of government he most admires ; this is not the first time he has rendered himself obnoxious to the suspicions of the officers intrusted with the preservation of public tranquillity. He was one of those to whom Oviedo was introduced, p. 5, packet 1, as commissioner for the revolutionists of Puebla. He was acquainted with that person's commission, attended the meetings for the purpose of discussing it at Mier's and Yturribarria's, as well as in the house of the honourable Santamaria. A witness, p. 7, packet 1, accuses him of entertaining sanguinary views with regard to the capital of the empire ; three others, pp. 68 and 83, packet 2, and p. 7, packet 1, agree that he was one of those who were to guide the public opinion by their writings ; two, pp. 10, 11, and 14, packet 1, (Morales and Oviedo,) heard him offer to send from Durango one hundred or more armed troops, in aid of the revolution.

Don Tomas Castro denies every thing in his declaration, pp. 17 and 18, packet 2 ; but it appears that he propagated the report that the Emperor was about to abolish the Congress, and reminded the officers of their promise to support it : he confesses it, p. 60, packet 4 ; and it is proved by Don Jose Rafael Andrade and Don Juan de Dios Arzamendi, p. 59, *ibid.* According to Oviedo, this was the mode employed to alarm and prejudice men's minds, so that when the plot should be ripe, they might possess greater strength for the completion of the revolution. He was one of those who

knew of Oviedo's commission, as Oviedo and Zerezero prove, p. 5, packet 1, p. 63, packet 2. Aware of the object of the meetings, he was invited to one of them ; he went, and acting with more caution than his accomplices, he requested that he should not be again sent for, as his occupations would not allow him to attend ; but he offered his person and services whenever they might be considered useful (Oviedo, p. 7, packet 2—Zerezero, p. 64, packet 2.) He was present at the meeting in the street of Trapaleros (Oviedo, p. 9, packet 1—Anaya, p. 85, packet 2—Yturribarria, p. 30, packet 4.) He was to have seized on the Emperor's person (Oviedo, p. 6, packet 1) ; he did not dare to execute it, from having no points of support (Zerezero, p. 9, packet 1.) One witness accuses him (Oviedo, p. 11, packet 1) of having said that he had made an arrangement with the artillery to possess himself of the citadel ; and that when once the republic was proclaimed, he reckoned upon fifteen hundred men within Mexico, p. 67, packet 2 ; and Oviedo cites, p. 61, packet 4, to Don Jose Joaquin Morales, who was unable to make a declaration from being dangerously ill.

The cadet, Don Jose Joaquin Morales, wrote Zerezero's letter, p. 10, packet 1. Zerezero mentions it, p. 66, packet 2, and Morales himself confesses it, pp. 60 and 61, packet 2. It is not yet understood whether he had any other share in this business ; but thus much is sufficient to prove him acquainted with the whole plot, and his silence places him among the number of accomplices.

Donna Antonia Villalba, wife of Don Agustin Galle-

gos, has been guilty of perjury in her declaration, p. 9, packet 3; in her confrontation with Oviedo, p. 60, packet 4, she belies herself, and confesses to having heard her nephew speak of the project of a republic: she is, therefore, an accomplice, as being privy to the conspiracy.

Don Ygnacio Sierra has two witnesses against him, Gutierrez and Mayagoitia, pp. 100, packet 2, 61, packet 4, and 62, *ibid.* They accuse him of republicanism, and of being a circulator of principles subversive of order; he confesses it in his confrontation, p. 62, excusing himself through ignorance. He confesses plainly, and without offering an excuse, to have spoken ill of the Emperor.

Joaquin Sires is a decided and enthusiastic apologist of republicanism: this is proved by the depositions of the Conde del Penasco, and the witnesses, Don Paulino Samano, Don Juan Velez, Don Vicente Bentensa, Don Domingo Hoyo, and Don Juan Jose Machado, p. 49, packet 2; document 2, 55 of the same, 34 and 36, packet 3. He bears a deadly hatred to the Emperor, abhors the established government, and was the ring-leader of the disturbances in the galleries of the Congress.

Becerra appears to have been passive, but there are four witnesses, La Madrid, Erdosain, Don J. J. Lopez Romano, and Don Manuel Ovio del Campillo, pp. 96, 98, 100, and 102, packet 2, who condemn him as having come hither on a commission, from the conspirators in the vicinity of Valladolid, to acquire information concerning the progress of the revolution, and transmit the same to his constituents as opportunities presented.

Don Jose Maria Bustamante, of Tehuacan, stands convicted upon his own confession, p. 22, packet 1, of being an agent of republicanism in the country where he resided.

Against the other persons in custody, no crime can be proved; there are sufficient appearances to warrant their detention as suspicious persons, and to justify the government, on their liberation, to issue directions to the chiefs and authorities to watch over their behaviour, and not to lose sight of them.

Such is my report on the examinations taken up to the present period. The tribunal, or judges, to whom the report will be sent, to take the necessary legal measures till sentence be declared, may find in subsequent examinations more abundant proofs of facts, concerning which there are now but mere appearances; and may find further evidence of the criminality of those whom I have considered as guilty.

In order that your Excellency may be enabled to give his Majesty any explanation which he may require, without occupying time in making extracts or reconciling contradictions, I will relate to your Excellency in few words, the origin, progress, and actual state of the revolution to the time of the imprisonments, which took place at the end of August last. In Puebla, the idea of overturning the government and converting the empire into a republic, first began to gain ground.

Don Atenogenes Rojas, or Rojano, used his influence with the troops of the garrison, in order to forward this

object. He had agents at different points, such as Tehuacan, the Plains of Apan, Perote, Puente Imperial, the Sierra de Perote, and Huamantla. The ramifications branched off to Tulancingo, Valladolid, Vera Cruz, Durango, and the Eastern inland provinces. They counted upon the inhabitants of many of these points, and on the greater part of those who had been insurgents, together with some part of the army, infantry, and cavalry, the artillery of the capital, and the major part of the Congress. They relied on the information of their emissaries, with respect to the national militia and the insurgents; and as to what they had to expect from portions of the army, they relied on the opinion which they had manifested in the papers laid before the public; as, for instance, in the representation of the 11th regiment of cavalry, that of the 4th infantry, and that styling itself "the artillery decidedly in favour of the Congress." They founded their hopes of assistance from the latter, on the circumstance that, in its public discussions, republicanism had been mentioned with enthusiasm; that allusions to that form of government were heard with cheers by some, and were opposed by few. They were also aware that the papers upon this subject had been well received by the people, which induced them to rely upon the general opinion, and to believe that the provinces could not have elected, as deputies, such well-known republicans as Doctor Miers, Don Juan De Dios Mayorga, Don Juan Pablo Anaya, and others, unless the electors had been of the same sentiments: see the declaration of Zerezero, p. 65, packet 2. In order to procure some funds, it was projected, that a body of eighty or more men should attack the convoy

which was to set out from Mexico. This project was frustrated by the timely detachment of a few troops to the point fixed for the robbery. Fear dispersed the banditti, and they retired to watch for a better opportunity. On the suggestion of an adjutant of the 11th cavalry, an ensign of the 12th was sent to Mexico in order to find out some men of science, experience, and tried sentiments, from amongst whom a leader of the faction might be chosen. Such men it was not difficult to meet with; Miers, Anaya, Morales, Yturribarria, Castro, and Zerezero were the parties fixed upon.

Anaya having been appointed the chief, they all exerted themselves for the success of the enterprise: it was already far advanced; already the overthrow of the government was boldly talked over, even in public places. The first proclamation was proposed to be made in Puebla and Perote, where it was said the greatest strength of the party lay. They imagined they should have an immediate disposable force of 4,600 men, at the lowest calculation. As soon as the proclamation was made in the above places, the person of the Emperor and those of his family were to have been seized upon. With respect to the Emperor, there were some who looked forward to his death, the fate, they said, that should await all tyrants, p. 7, packet 1.; but the major part were inclined to have the whole imperial family placed at the disposal of the congress, who were to send them out of the kingdom with a pension settled on them, but never to be paid. A *diet*, for so they called it, was to provide funds for the republican army, and to take other measures in cases of urgency; and in this posture of

affairs, counting on the opinion and sentiments of the congress, they were to proclaim it in a state of liberty (supposing it not to be so already), and to choose the government best adapted for us, which would be republican, since a majority in favour of it was fully depended on, p. 65, packet 2. Mexico was not to be the place of government, p. 83, packet 2, as these Catos considered the population corrupted. We do not know when the blow was to have been struck, but it is to be inferred that it was arranged for the end of August, as nothing was wanting to the plan but its execution. The project was without unity or coherence; it was formed unskillfully, and the hopes entertained were for the most part chimerical, and all this through ignorance, and not for want of disposition on the part of the conspirators. The plan would never have produced the effect intended, but it would have been productive of many evils attendant upon such an insurrection, because it had in it no elements of order. It is not to be denied that among the reformers were men of talent, invention, and knowledge; they were the few, while the majority were utterly destitute of all these advantages, and the whole of them were deficient in that rectitude of intention, and in that experience so requisite for bringing such an affair to the conclusion which they contemplated. There was no rectitude of intention, because the public good was not the point aimed at; the basest of passions, envy, hatred, and ambition were their springs of action: one takes upon him duties he is unable to fulfil, another attempts to lead the opinion of the public by means of obsolete Gothic phrases, which if we do not do him the favour of mistaking for the ravings of insanity, we must believe to be the

offspring of a blind and extravagant ambition. Another, for his maintenance, takes on him the office of writing papers, in order to cause a sort of prevarication in public opinion. Another pretends to have obtained in distant countries the first posts in the army, in order that for this new service at least one step higher may be given him. In truth, the whole of them are men who hazard nothing, who have nothing to lose, and who seek to build up their fortunes amid the ruin of their fellow-citizens, the destruction of thousands of families, and the blood of those innocent persons who might unhappily be prevailed upon to yield to the delusive attractions that would be held out to them. What opinion can be formed, what hopes entertained of ungrateful men, who begin by seeking the death of him who gave them liberty, and by concerting the banishment of the family of that very individual who sacrificed every thing to free his country from a foreign yoke? What expectations can be entertained of minds so superficial, as to reckon on the overthrow of an empire with the co-operation of whole provinces, solely because a foreigner lately arrived here says so? If they had at all fathomed the matter, and acquainted themselves with the weakness of the intelligence received, they would have found that those provinces on which they depended were reduced to half a dozen men of perverse character, without influence, without talent, and without fortune, who might be followed by a hundred miserable wretches, ruined, and accustomed to pillage, who, too indolent to gain their livelihood by labour, are indifferent whether they join a band of revolutionists or a band of robbers. What expectations could have been conceived of men who imagine whole bodies of troops to

be at their disposal, merely because they see some public paper written by individuals not belonging to the regiment, signed by some giddy youths inflamed with the vanity of authorship, forgetful of their duty as military men, and giving the rein to licentiousness? What could have been expected of men who reckoned on forming an army of private citizens, spread over an immense expanse of territory, and employed in their different avocations, without possessing arms wherewith to provide them,—without having consulted their wishes,—without having engaged even one emissary to dispose and unite them? What could have been expected of men who believed that the congress was republican, because some of its deputies might have given proofs of being inclined that way; who consider that all those provinces are of republican principles which have elected deputies who are so; without recollecting the mode in which those elections were carried on; and how men of intrigue, with a moderate capacity, can contrive to obtain the votes of men of simplicity, though sound in principle? How? If I should suffer my pen to run on I should scarcely say any thing new, or which every body is not aware of; but there are things of which it may not be proper for me to speak. In a word, I repeat that the project was founded on a chimerical basis; that its authors wished, but could not, give it shape; and that, but for the vigilance of government, the most terrifying anarchy would have been the result with which we should have been favoured by these patriots.

Let me be allowed now to make some reflections on

the ordinary causes of revolutions in every country, applying them to our own. The restless people is always fond of novelty. In times of revolution after a government is fixed upon, there are many men without employment or without that to which they looked forward; this is the time when the passions become most agitated, and if at such a period a constitution be not immediately granted, securing the punctual discharge of their pay to the civil and military functionaries, clearly marking out the limits and powers of the different authorities, preserving harmony between them, and taking away all cause of complaint from the people; there are always to be found men of perverse characters ready to take advantage of such circumstances in order to produce commotion, and embarrassed and discontented persons who innocently follow them, and rush forward to sacrifice themselves to the perversity of a few. In this state is Mexico at this moment, and whilst it so continues, the public tranquillity is not for a moment secure. There are no finances, and those who depend on them, as well as the other classes of society who gain by the circulation of them, are well acquainted with the reasons why there are none. There is no civil liberty because the powers of the authorities are not defined; and further, because we have no constitution. That of Spain was sworn to, but it is impaired by degrees every day, and no other is substituted for it, which is the same thing as if we had no fundamental laws, and were dependent on the will of a body of men; and the despotism of such a body is more to be feared than that of the sultan.

There is no police,—there are no courts of justice,—

and man, by the corruption of his nature is always prone to crime, when he sees the probability of acting with impunity.

I do not enlarge further from a wish not to distract any longer the attention of your Excellency. I am fully aware that even the little I have said will acquire me a thousand enemies ; but it is of no importance to me if I should become a victim for having spoken the truth when I found an occasion to speak it ; and I shall be happy if the sacrifice to which I expose myself and my family, produce to the community to which I belong this good effect, that the ruling party may reflect upon the situation of the country, and preserve it from anarchy, bloodshed, and many years of mourning and misfortune.

In what I have stated, I have had no other object in view than the general good ; and confining myself to my opinion respecting the persons in custody, Heaven preserve me from being confounded with the greater part of those *fiscals*, whose boast it is to find out crimes where there are none.

As to punishments I have said nothing, considering my commission not to have extended so far. The judges in due time will award them.

Your Excellency will be pleased to submit this report to the consideration of his Majesty, and excuse me if I have not executed my charge so well, or so promptly as

might have been desired, and as the confidence placed in me demanded.

May God preserve your Excellency, &c.

Mexico, September 30th, 1822.

FRANCISCO DE PAULA ALVAREZ.

*To His Excellency the Minister of
Relations, Don Manuel de Herrera.*

No. IX.

CREDENTIALS OF THE DEPUTIES TO CORTES.

In the city of the day of 1822,
and second of independence.—In the chapter-hall of the
municipality in full council assembled, consisting of the
individuals summoned *ante diem*, viz., D. and N.,
D. N. &c., under the presidency of the political chief
D. N., or the Señor Alcalde D. N., the provincial
electors D. N., D. N., &c., being assembled, together
with the municipality, they declared before me, the
under-signed secretary, that the Sovereign Junta having
ordered the cortes to be convoked, and the rules being
established whereby the elections should be regulated,
it directed for the purpose of carrying those rules into
effect that there should be a total renewal of the muni-

cipalities of all the cities and towns, according to the regulation which is laid down. This order having been obeyed in the several divisions (*partidos*) of this province; the citizens of all classes, without distinction, and according to the plan of Iguala, proceeded to confer upon the municipalities the necessary powers; considering also that they have a right to name an individual out of their own body as elector of "*Partido*," who, in conjunction with those of his class in the municipality, might elect a provincial elector, in whose hands they should deposit the national right conferred on them. This having been done, and in virtue thereof all the electors of the province of Mexico being assembled, they named for first deputy to the constituent cortes of the empire, D. N., out of the twenty-eight whom it belongs to them of right to nominate; and to him they transfer their faculties and the powers conferred on them by the citizens which compose the towns and divisions, (*partidos*,) by means of their respective municipalities; they confer on him the same powers as they have conferred on the other provincial deputies collectively and individually, in order to execute the highly important duties of his office, and in order that in conjunction with the other deputies of cortes representing the Mexican nation, all its kingdoms, provinces, districts, cities, towns, congregations, wards, missions, estates and citizens, of all classes, without distinction, might confer upon and resolve what they may conceive to be conducive to the general good; and thus employing the power in them vested, they might constitute the government of the empire upon the fundamental basis of the plan of Iguala and the treaty of Cordova; establishing the absolute

separation of the legislative power, the executive, and the judicial, so that they may never be united in one sole person. And the constituents promise both for themselves and in the name of all the citizens of this province, in virtue of the powers vested in them as electors named for the purpose, to hold as valid, to obey and fulfil such decrees as they may issue in their capacity of deputies to cortes, and as constituents of the government of the Mexican nation. And in the same manner they bind the citizens of the province, of all its cities, towns, &c., to obey them so far as they order and determine, respecting the constitution which they may establish as the fundamental law of the empire.

Thus they have expressed and granted, ordering that this credential of the election should be given to S. DN. ; and the political chief and two regidores have signed, the same together with myself, as witnesses.

No. X.

Copy of the form of Oath taken by the Deputies to Cortes at the solemn ceremony which preceded the installation of the Congress.

A crucifix and the holy gospels, being placed upon a portable altar, in the middle of the sanctuary, and the priest and deacons remaining standing at the foot of

the vestibule, the body of canons occupied the lateral seats.

Then the four most excellent secretaries of state and the three of the Sovereign Junta standing, received the oath of the deputies as they arrived by two and two in the following form :—

Do you swear to preserve and defend the Roman Catholic Apostolic religion, without admitting any other into the empire ?

Yes ; I swear.

Do you swear religiously to keep, and cause to be kept, the independence of the Mexican nation ?

Yes ; I swear,

Do you swear to form the political constitution of the Mexican nation upon the fundamental basis of the Plan of Iguala and the treaty of Cordova, sworn to by the nation ; bearing yourself well and faithfully in the exercise of the power conferred by the nation upon you ; seeking in every thing its greatest prosperity, and establishing the absolute separation of the legislative, executive, and judicial powers, so that they may never be united in one sole person or corporation ?

Yes ; I swear.

If thus you may, let the eternal and almighty God assist you ; and if not, his Divine Majesty and the nation shall demand it of you.

No. XI.

ACT OF CASA MATA.

The generals of divisions, chiefs of corps, officers of the staff, and also one chosen from every class of the army* being assembled at the quarters of the Commander-in-Chief to treat upon the capture of the town of Vera Cruz, and of the dangers which threatened the country for want of a national representation, (the sole bulwark of civil liberty,) after having fully deliberated upon the means of promoting its happiness, unanimously agreed to the following articles :—

ART. 1. It being undoubted that the sovereignty resides essentially in the people, the Congress is to be installed as soon as possible.

ART. 2. The convocatorias of the new cortes, shall be framed upon the same bases as the previous one.

ART. 3. Considering that among the deputies who formed the late Congress, there were some who by their liberal ideas, and firmness of character, gained the public esteem, whilst others did not duly correspond to the confidence placed in them, the provinces have full authority to re-elect the former, and to substitute for the

* All this grand parade consisted of only two thousand and odd men.

latter persons more adequate to the fulfilment of their arduous duties*.

ART. 4. As soon as the representatives of the nation shall be assembled, they will fix their residence in such city or town as they may consider most convenient in order to commence their sessions.

ART. 5. The corps which compose this army, and those which hereafter may enter into it, must solemnly ratify the oath to support, at all risks, the national representation.

ART. 6. The commanders, officers, and troops, who are not disposed to sacrifice themselves for the good of

* Amongst other absurdities committed by the chiefs and officers, who formed this act, they fell into that of arrogating to themselves the attributes of sovereignty, in all the extent of that word. As if they should confer a favour on the provinces, they tell to them, that they shall have full power to re-elect certain deputies whom they name, and they assume all the authority of legislators; by ordering that other deputies should be re-elected in place of those with respect to whom they have made themselves judges, and whom, without the least formality and without any right, they condemned; depriving them even of the privileges of citizenship, which must be understood by their not being capable of re-election, and by the declaration of their not having corresponded to the confidence reposed in them. Had this been said by one or many unaided by physical strength, they would have been condemned to death, but it was said by soldiers with arms in their hands, and therefore their will was law. Now, if law be strength, then I see no reason for so much declamation against tyranny, nor for the eulogies lavished on liberal systems; and still less that an army should be hailed as liberators which commences by doing violence to the public will. Let us, therefore, allow that passion is always the same, and that (as was remarked by a philosopher) ages and events are contained one within another, as trees are in their seeds. Of the present occurrences going on at Mexico, it cannot be difficult to foresee what must be the result ere long.

the country, are at liberty to remove whithersoever they please.

ART. 7. A commission shall be named, which shall proceed with copies of this act, to the capital, and place it in the hands of his Majesty the Emperor.

ART. 8. Another commission shall proceed with a copy to Vera Cruz, to make known to the governor and corporations there, the movements which have been made by the army, and to see whether they adhere to it or not.

ART. 9. Another commission shall proceed, for the like purpose, to the chiefs dependent upon this Army, now besieging the bridge, and in the towns*.

ART. 10. In the interim until the supreme government send its answer, the provincial deputation of this province shall deliberate respecting the administrative part of the government, if that step should meet its approbation.

ART. 11. The army will never make any attempt against the person of the Emperor, as it considers him decided in favour of the national representation. The army will take up its quarters in such towns as circumstances may require ; and it shall not separate upon any account, without the consent of the Sovereign Congress, seeing that it is the only support upon which the Congress has to depend in its deliberations.

Head-Quarters, Casa Mata,

1st February, 1823.

* The towns of Jalapa, Oriava, and Cordova.

No. XII.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF RELATIONS

The Secretary of His Majesty has addressed to me the following Official Document, dated this day.

MOST EXCELLENT SIR,

The Emperor commands me to inform your Excellency, in order that you may apprise the Sovereign Congress hereof. 1st. That as that body has been acknowledged as the national representative by the Junta of Puebla, and the troops who have signed the act of Casa Mata, no motive any longer exists for those divisions which for some days we have experienced; that there is no longer any reason why His Imperial Majesty should retain in the capital and its vicinity, the Troops who chose to follow him, and that neither the person of the Emperor, nor the rank with which the nation invested him, ought to be an obstacle against realizing the plans which are deemed most conducive to the happiness of the country.

2d. That he accepted the crown, thus making the greatest of all sacrifices, because he was persuaded that by this act, he gave the most convincing testimony to the nation of being entirely devoted to its service. He had already exposed his life, his honour, his family, and his fortune for it, and afterwards his liberty, his tranquillity, and even the love of the people; the only re-

compense he sought, he also sacrificed, for he was not unaware that he would lose all by ascending the throne. Such being the case, he sought only for an opportunity to descend from it, and no opportunity has offered itself more favourable than the present; when, by resigning the reigns of government, he prevents at least his name from being used as a pretext for a civil war, and its train of attendant evils. From the moment that he foresaw the result of those causes, to which the origin of the present circumstances may be traced, he resolved to abdicate a crown which weighed so heavily upon him, and he only delayed this act until a competent authority generally recognised, should be established. Such is the Congress, and to it he delivers the Executive Power which he exercises, and makes an absolute abdication.

3d. That as the presence in the Empire of the Emperor might, when he ceases to be such, serve as a pretext for a thousand movements which would be attributed to him, although he is sure that he never would take part in them; in order to avoid persecution, repel all suspicion from himself, and evil from the nation, he will voluntarily expatriate himself, and in a foreign land, he will hear with happiness of the prosperity of his country, or deplore the misfortunes which fate may have prepared for her.

4th. Twelve or fifteen days will be sufficient for him to arrange his domestic concerns, and prepare to take his family with him.

5th. Notwithstanding the allowances which were

made him, first as Admiral in Chief, and subsequently as Emperor, the state of the Exchequer and the necessity of supporting the troops and the civil functionaries, (considerations always paramount to those of his own person,) prevented him from receiving more than a portion of the other funds assigned him* ; at the same time it was necessary for him to live, and give to authority some part at least of that importance which is every where attributed to it, and he was therefore obliged to contract some debts with his friends, which however, are not of a great amount † ; still his credit is pledged, and he hopes that the nation will think proper to discharge them.

I hope your Excellency will be pleased to apprise me of the determination of the Sovereign Congress.

God preserve your Excellency many years.

ALVAREZ.

Tacubaya, 20th March, 1823.

*His Excellency the Minister
of Affairs.*

I communicate this to your Excellencies, in order that you may say it before the Sovereign Congress.

JOSE DEL VALLE.

Mexico, 20th March, 1823.

*To the Most Excellent Deputies, Secretaries,
of the Sovereign Congress.*

* It was no more than 45,0000 dollars in three years of command ; two-fifths of which, at least, were spent in behalf of the same nation, and of several citizens.

† One hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

No. XIII.

ITURBIDE'S FAREWELL ADDRESS TO THE
MEXICAN NATION.

Honourable Deputies,—The expression of truth never yet offended delicacy, nor the most punctilious sense of decorum; neither would an honest man ever hear it with displeasure. In the palace or in the cottage, it always honours those who declare it, and not less those who listen to it.

As I am on the eve of my departure, I deem it my duty to speak openly to the nation, through you its representatives. He who ascends a throne does not therefore cease to be a man, and error is in the inheritance of mankind. Monarchs are not to be looked upon as infallible; on the contrary, they are more excusable in their faults, or crimes as some would characterize them, if such a contradiction coincide with the principle of the day. I repeat, their errors are the more excusable because, being placed in the centre of every movement, in the point towards which all interests are directed, or what is the same thing, the point at which all the passions of men meet in conflict; their attention divided among an innumerable multitude of objects; their minds fluctuate between truth and falsehood; candour and hypocrisy, friendship and self interest, flattery and patriotism, all use one language, all present themselves before the Prince under the same appearance.—He may sincerely wish to act for the best, and that very wish may precipitate him into the very reverse. The philosopher, however, takes refuge in his conscience, and though he may be doomed

to suffer, yet remorse is unknown to him. Unfortunately the best intentioned advice does not always, when acted up to, produce the desired result. Those whose counsels I followed, respecting the most important measures, persuaded me that the happiness of the country required me to do what I have done; and to which acts results are attributed that in any other case would have been the same, with this difference only, that the true or apparent cause (time will decide which,) would have been weakness in the one case, and despotism in the other. Miserable is the condition of him who cannot do right; still more miserable the fate of him, who is conscious of his impotence. Men are not just towards their contemporaries; it is necessary to appeal to the judgment of posterity, because the passions die with the heart that sheltered them.

Much is said of public opinion, and of the violence of its development; we always err hastily and ascertain the truth but slowly. Opinion has its crucible (crisor); its effects are not ephemeral, and this convinces me that we cannot yet ascertain what is the public opinion of the Mexicans, because either they have none, or have not yet manifested it. In the space of twelve years, one might count as many public opinions which were at least reputed to be such.

Altercations commenced—I foresaw their result, but could not control the effects of fate. I was obliged to appear either as a weak man, or a despot; I preferred the former, nor do I regret it. I know that I am not so. I lessened the evils which threatened the people, and

raised up a dyke which resisted torrents of blood. The satisfaction arising from having done this is my reward.

I am not ignorant of the predilection which is entertained for my person in different places, nor can I doubt of it after receiving such convincing testimonies. Neither am I ignorant, that by fomenting the spirit of discord, and hastening the progress of that anarchy which threatens the nation, the towns which are now suffering all the horrors of disunion, would express different wishes, and declare themselves in a decided manner.

But my system never shall be that of discord. I look upon anarchy with horror; I detest its fatal influence, and wish for union as the only source of the welfare of a country in which I was born, and which for so many reasons must be ever dear to my heart.

The plan which I selected to terminate dissensions, was one of peace and harmony, of order and tranquillity; regardless of my own person, I looked only to the good of the nation; and consented to any sacrifices, in order that the people should be called upon to make none. I endeavoured to prevent the revolution from assuming the character of a physical re-action, which is always sanguinary; and that every movement should first be indicated by the people, and executed with prudence by the authorities.

I sent commissioners to Jalapa, to treat in a confidential and amicable manner with the generals and chiefs

of the army, and if possible to bring to a peaceful termination the differences which had taken place. I submitted to the deliberation of the Instituent Junta, the points which still impeded the conclusion of a negotiation of the last importance. I decreed the re-establishment of the Congress, as soon as I was apprized, first by the commissioners and afterwards by the deputation of this province, that the re-instatement of the body which had before existed was conformable to the wishes of the majority, as well as to those of the generals and chiefs. I restored it as soon as I knew that there were a sufficient number of deputies in Mexico to form it. Upon the day of its restoration, I made known to it that I was ready to make any sacrifice that the real welfare of the nation required. I left it to choose (as was just) the place of its meeting, and again repeated my desire to conform to what might be the general will of the nation, and Congress which represents it. I proposed that if, for its greater liberty and security, it should wish all the troops to retire, that wish should be decisive, and the Congress might deliberate without being surrounded by arms. I informed it through the proper channel, that if the measures already taken for its security and liberty were not thought sufficient, that it should suggest what measures might still be considered requisite, and the government would provide for their execution. I abdicated the crown, declaring that if that was the origin of dissensions, I did not desire to impede the happiness of the people.—I added, that when this point should be decided I would banish myself from America, and fix my residence and that of my family in a foreign land, where, far from Mexico, it could not

be imagined that any influence of mine might embarrass the progress of this great community. I declared that whilst the question of my abdication was undergoing discussion, I would retire from the capital, thus furnishing one more proof of my desire that the Congress should have full liberty in such an important discussion.

I requested that the Congress should commission some individuals from its own body, to treat with the generals of the army, after hearing them and me, upon the decency and decorum of the manner in which I should retire. I refused to avail myself of the permission which was given me to select the five hundred men who were appointed as my personal escort. I myself proposed that General Don Nicolas Bravo, who deserves the confidence of the public, should be the commander of that escort. I have anxiously sought that looking to my measures, attending to all my words and actions, the people whether they advance towards happiness or misery, may at least not think that their fate has been influenced by me.

The necessity of any further sacrifice has not presented itself to my recollection ; but if within the range of possibility, there be any other which the welfare of the nation requires, I am ready to make it.

I love the country in which I was born, and believe that I shall leave to my children a name more solidly glorious by sacrificing myself for it, than by commanding the people from the dangerous eminence of a throne.

I quit the country with all my family. Before taking my departure I was desirous of unfolding the plan of my government, and the sentiments of my soul. I knew that this rich portion of America ought not to be subject to Castile. I imagined such was the will of the nation, and therefore supported its rights, and proclaimed its independence ; I have laboured in its government, and abdicate the crown if such abdication may be conducive to its happiness.

The Congress is now the first authority, which is to give a direction to the movements of the people.

If that body arrive at the object of its wishes without shedding the blood of individuals :—If united round one common centre it shall put an end to discord and divisions : if governed by wise laws, raised upon a solid basis, the people shall be secured in the enjoyment of their rights, and undisturbed by convulsions, they shall labour in opening and cleansing the sources of public wealth ;—If under the protection of a government, which imposes no restriction on the individual interest of agriculturists, artisans, and merchants, they shall all become opulent, or at least be raised above poverty ; if the kingdom of Mexico rejoicing in the happiness of its children, shall at length reach the station it ought to hold amongst the nations ; I shall be the first admirer of the wisdom of the Congress, I shall enjoy the happiness of my country, and go down cheerfully to my grave.

AUGUSTIN.

Tacubaya,
29th March, 1823.

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